

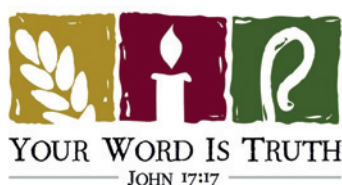
Archdiocese of Cashel & Emly



Diocesan Listening Process Report and next steps – a discussion document.



SPRING 2019



A project of Cashel & Emly Diocesan Pastoral Council.

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Foreword

Spring 2019



Dear Friends,

As Spring emerges all around us, I take this opportunity to greet you and to invite you to read and reflect on the report that you now have in your hands the “Diocesan Listening Process Report”.

We embarked on a journey in the Archdiocese over two years ago, together we set out to listen and dialogue to and with each other about our faith and our church life. Our task, then and now, remains the same as we plan for the future. The journey that we began has now reached an important moment with the publication of this report for all to read, reflect and share about what has emerged.

This report is the first fruits of the meetings and subsequent work of putting together the replies and responses from so many people over many months. The listening process has made every effort to be as inclusive as it possibly can be through inviting contributions from people of all ages and various groups in the Archdiocese.

The commitment and engagement of so many people has been encouraging and inspiring. It highlights your regard and interest in matters of faith and church life. My thanks to all who have contributed their time and energy to the listening process and to those who faithfully recorded and compiled the report that you are now reading.

The report is an important body of material as we continue on our journey of reflecting and planning for the future. I kindly ask you to read and reflect on it not just by yourself but also with your fellow parishioners and fellow church members from neighbouring parishes.

Our journey is now well underway and new challenges are emerging. I ask you to continue to engage with each stage of the listening process. I thank you for your participation so far and I look forward to being with you when this report is reflected on and discussed as we move forward together.

Sincerely,

+ Kevin O'Reilly

Introduction

The idea of a Listening Process arose from the discussions of the Diocesan Pastoral Council (DPC) - group of people and priests from around the archdiocese - who had been drawn together by Archbishop Kieran in June 2015. The Listening Process was given the impetus to begin with the publication of Kieran's Pastoral Letter (PL), *'Prepare the way of the Lord'* in September 2017. Shortly, afterwards we started our journey with the Pilot Listening Process and continued upon a review of it with our Listening Process throughout 2018 around all 46 parishes, with particular groups and online via our Diocesan website, in conjunction, with a Listening to Priests conducted by Dr John Weafer.

After careful and painstaking analysis we are now ready to report our findings by way of the important topics raised and the key messages for our attention supported by the relevant quotations of people and priests of our archdiocese. The actual Listening Process could not have happened without the commitment of the DPC members from throughout the diocese since 2015, the support of the Council of Priests (CoP) and, in particular, the leadership of Archbishop Kieran in seeking the views of people throughout the diocese. The welcome and cooperation afforded by the each parish as well the participation of parishioners in the Listening Process has been encouraging and provides hope for the future of the faith in our diocese. It is important to note the generous volunteer effort that has enabled the Listening Process - a summary is contained within 'The story of the Listening Process 2017-18', as outlined at the end of this report.

We now have a valuable set of data to reflect upon as we take our next steps. We ask you to engage with our next steps which will involve a careful reading through the detail of this Diocesan Listening Process Report and consideration of its implications with the people and priests of your own parish, your neighbouring parishes and of our archdiocese. Every effort has been made to care for the integrity of the responses of people to our Listening Process Questionnaire and therefore, we ask that you take your time to respectfully reflect upon the views of all those who participated in our Listening Process. It is only by taking full account of the detail of this report that we can *"examine the present reality of our church today and"* then, *"chart out a path for the future."* (PL) We place this Diocesan Listening Process in your hands with confidence relying always on the help and guidance of the Holy Spirit as we take our next steps together.

Fr Martin Hayes

Diocesan Pastoral Planning & Development,
pastoral.office@cashel-emly.ie

Proposed Next Steps

Step 1: Feedback the Diocesan Listening Process Report to all Parishes via Deanery Gatherings;

- Present the Diocesan Listening Process Report to the Deanery Gatherings in March/April 2019 for discussion and for further discussion in parishes.
 - Each parish leadership group meet to discuss the full Diocesan Report in their own parish.
 - Each parish leadership group to engage with their parish upon the implications of the Diocesan Listening Process Report.

Step 2: Further engagement with Parishes at Deanery Gatherings, the Diocesan Pastoral Council, Council of Priests as well as those involved in the facilitation / analysis to discern the key goals for the future in May and in Autumn 2019.

- Each parish leadership group to report back to a Deanery Gathering in May 2019 at which they receive their Parish Listening Reports for discussion then and for
- further discussion in their parishes in preparation for Deanery Gatherings in Autumn 2019.
- Consultation with those who have been involved in the facilitation of parish groups and the analysis of the Listening Process.
- Joint meetings of the Diocesan Pastoral Council and Council of Priests to discern feedback from the Deanery Gatherings in May and Autumn 2019.

Step 3: Create a Diocesan Pastoral Plan to be completed by Dec 2019.

Step 4: Implementation of the goals identified for 2019-2021.

Also, make the Diocesan Report available in hard copy for all those at the Deanery Gatherings in March/April 2019 and online on the Diocesan website.

Publicise these next steps throughout the diocese via Parish Newsletters, local newspapers, radio stations, at Confirmations and on our Diocesan website.

Useful Resources, already in place to respond to the Listening Process Report:

Diocesan Pastoral Council: Diocesan Office, office@cashel-emly.ie

Members: Fr John Beatty (Tipperary), Fr Pat Burns (Pallasgrea), Sr Breda Coman (Templemore), Ann Dargan (Cappawhite), Fr Joe Egan (Boherlahan), Fr Eugene Everard (Tipperary), Tom Gallagher (Ballycahill), Mary Hally (Cashel), Ann Hassett (Templetuohy), Fr Martin Hayes, Bridget Jones (Templemore), Kathleen Kennedy (Borrisoleigh), Larry Kenny (Fethard), Bridget Kirwan (Moycarkey), Deirdre Lanigan (Thurles), Sr Rosemary McCarthy (Knockavilla), Anne McGrath (Cappawhite), Philomena Martin (Caherconlish), Sadie Moloney (Tipperary), Bob Noonan (Tipperary), Fr John O'Keefe (Newport), Finbarr O'Shea (Newport), Mary O'Sullivan (Bansha), Martin Quirke (Cashel), Michael Ryan (Holycross), Michael Ryan (Pallasgrea).

Council of Priests: Secretary, Fr Michael Mullaney, Michael.Mullaney@spcm.ie

Diocesan Office: office@cashel-emly.ie

Youth Forum: Contact Person, Fr Enda Brady, ejbradycc@gmail.com

The Youth Forum is actively working on the following next steps to engage with young people throughout the diocese;

- Compilation of an inventory of what is currently happening in the diocese.
- Connection with National Events.
- There needs to be a central link to organise youth activity.
- Rather than leaving the Youth seeing the Church as grey, we need to bring colour and vibrancy into liturgies and church life.
- Need to be more aware of local resources, i.e. Holycross Abbey and Glenstal Abbey.
- Parental Involvement could lead to Youth involvement.
- Link back to 'Youth Work Ireland'.
- Consideration of a further Listening Process for Youth in accord with the maxim '*nothing about you, without you.*'

Director of Youth Ministry & World Youth Day:

Fr Dominic Meehan, meehandominic@gmail.com

Faith Development / Training for Parish Ministry: Irish Institute for Pastoral Studies (IIPS), St Patrick's Campus, Mary Immaculate College (MIC), Cathedral St., Thurles, Co. Tipperary.

Contact Person; Fr Eamonn Fitzgibbon, IIPS@mic.ul.ie

or visit www.irishinstituteforpastoralstudies.com for further details.

Ongoing Formation & Care of Priests, 'Garryvoe Group':

Secretary, Fr John O'Keefe, frjohnokeefe@hotmail.com

Diocesan Choir: office@cashel-emly.ie

Diocesan Director of Safeguarding: Ms. Cleo Yates, safeguarding@cashel-emly.ie

Diocesan Director of Communications: Fr Joe Tynan, joety@eircom.net

Diocesan Director for Pastoral Planning & Development:

Fr Martin Hayes, pastoral.office@cashel-emly.ie

BREAKDOWN OF NUMBERS MENTIONING THE DIFFERENT TOPICS

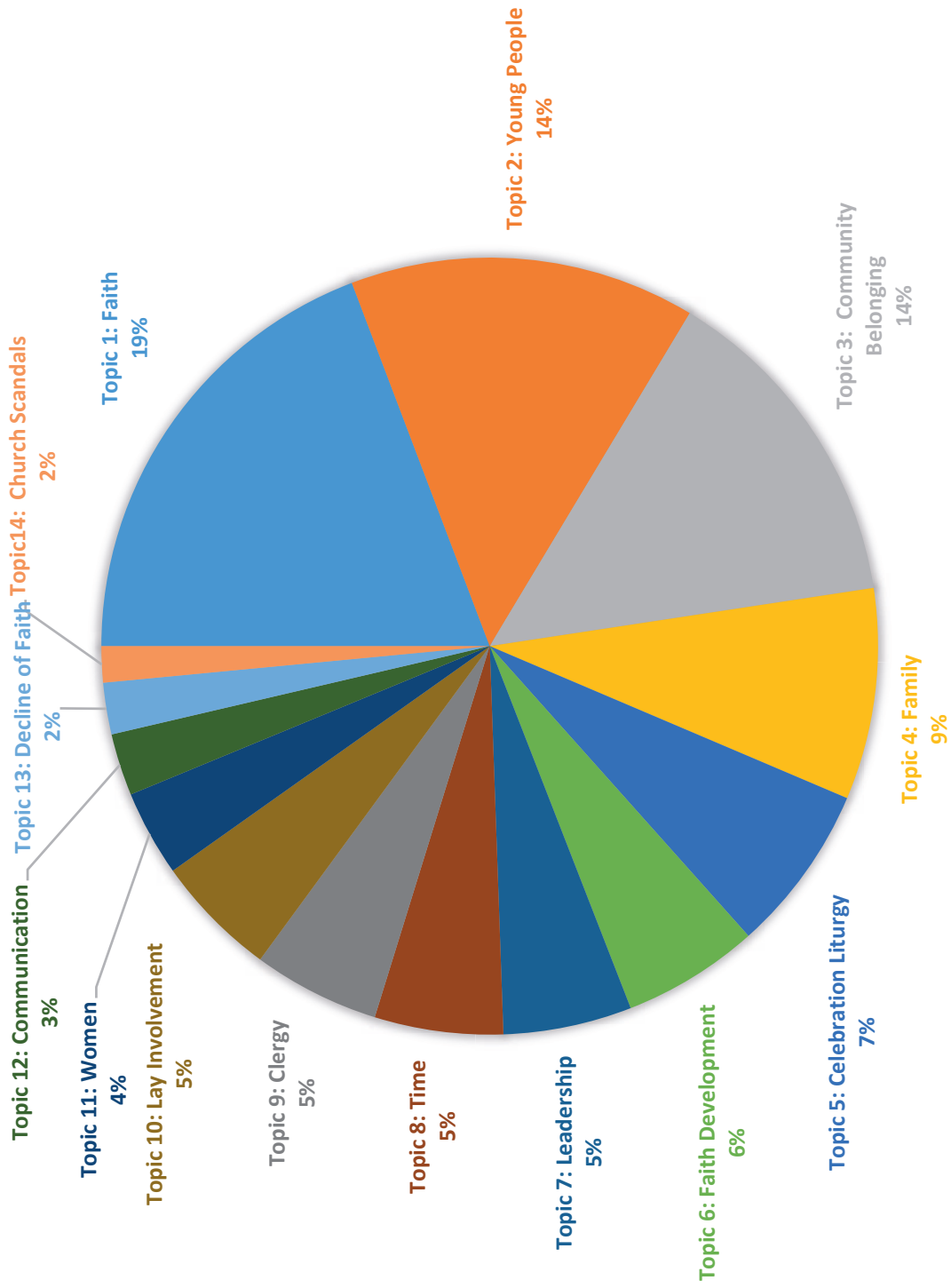


FIGURE 1: BREAKDOWN OF NUMBER OF RESPONSES FOR EACH TOPIC

BACKGROUND DATA

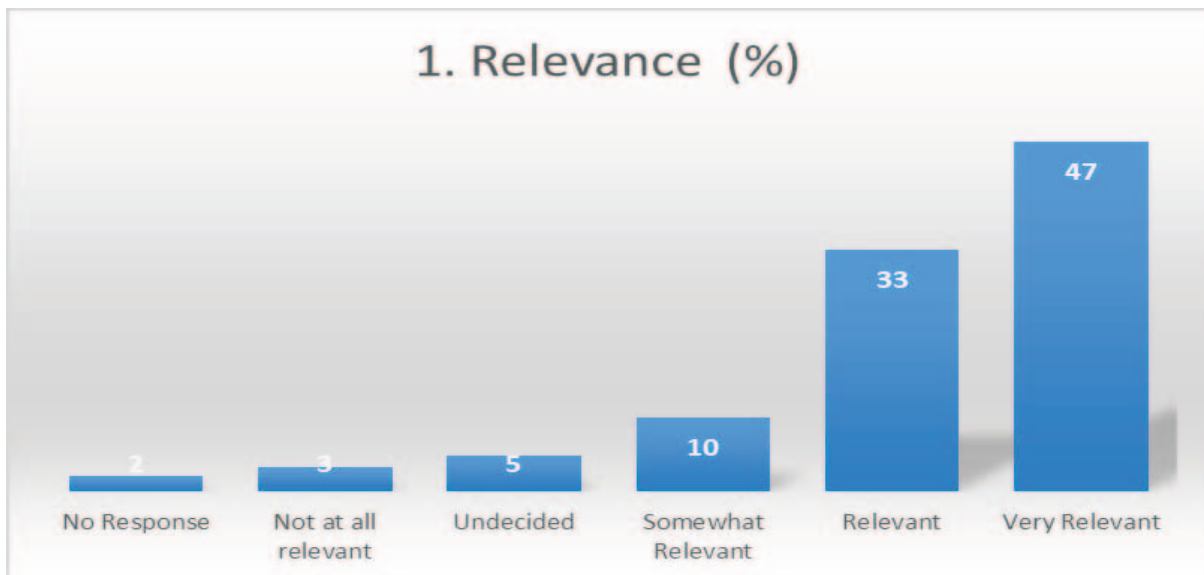


FIGURE 2: RELEVANCE

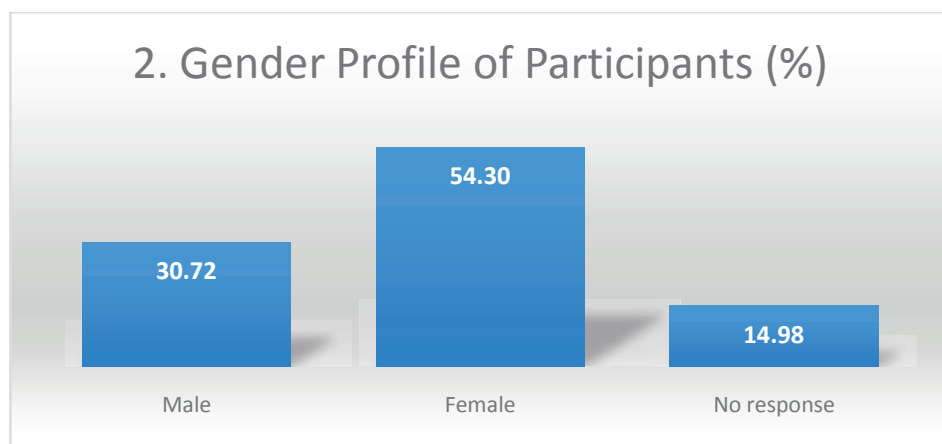


FIGURE 3: GENDER PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS

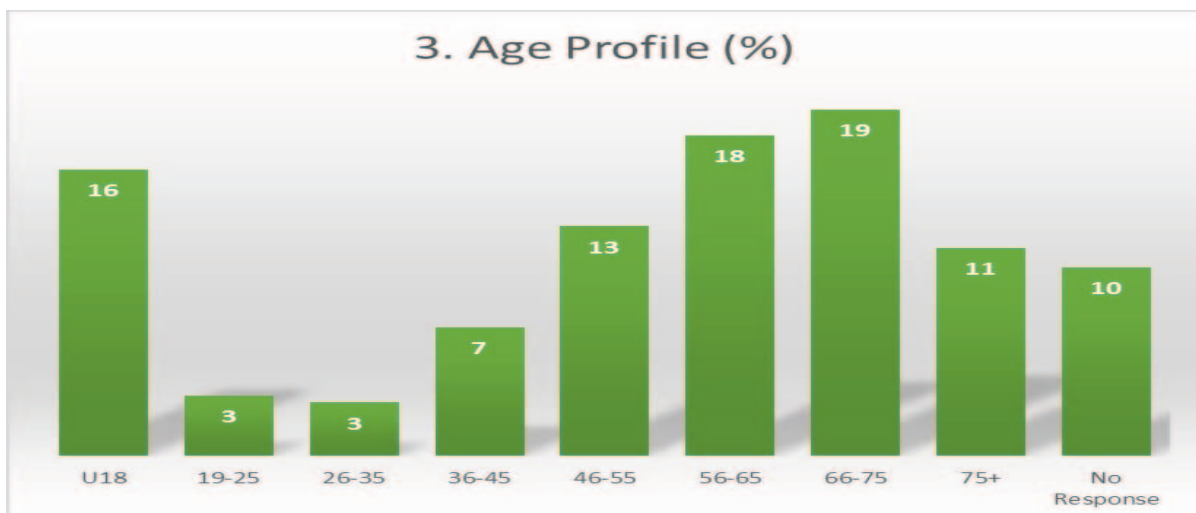


FIGURE 4: AGE PROFILE

Note: IN THE FOLLOWING SECTIONS THE ORDER OF THE PRESENTATION RELATES TO THE NUMBERS OF RESPONSES ON THE SPECIFIC AREA.

TOPIC 1: Faith

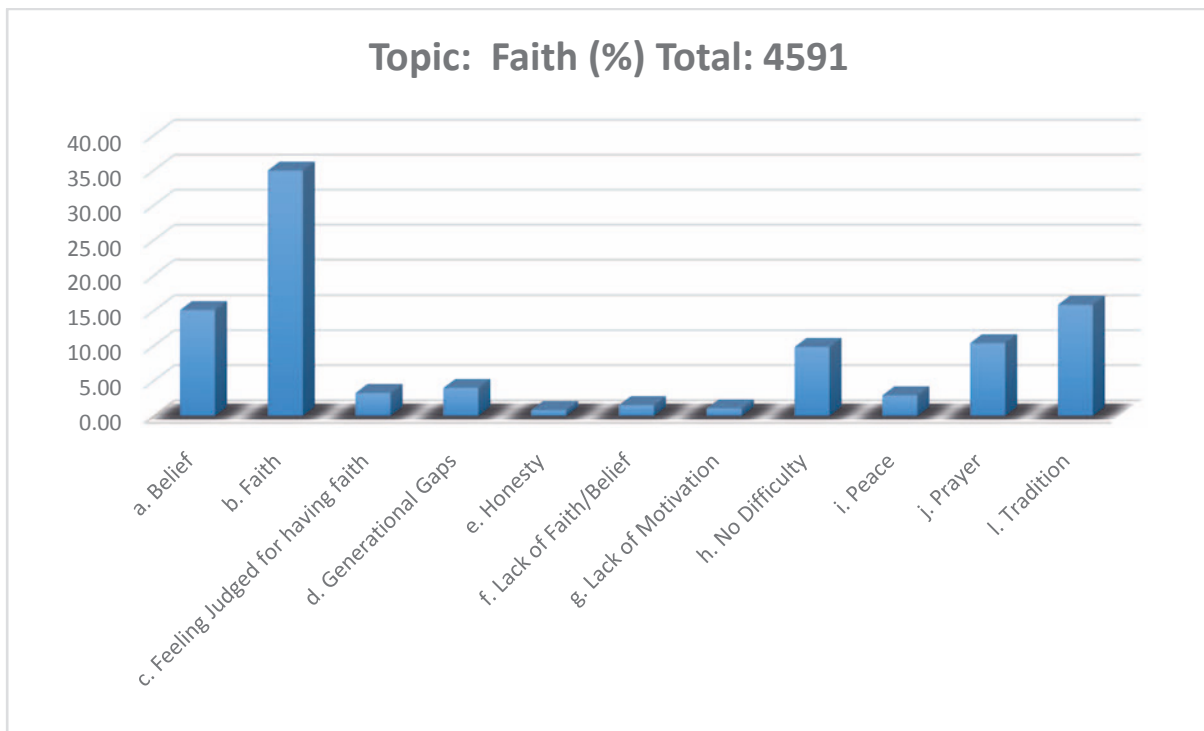


FIGURE 5: TOPIC: FAITH AND BELIEF

| Topic 1: Faith | Key Areas Identified | Quotes |
|------------------|---|--|
| a. Belief | <p>God found in the created world</p> <p>Strong sense of belief in God leading to involvement</p> <p>Difficulties</p> | <p><i>'Inspired by an admiration and appreciation of the incredible beauty and wonder of creation that surrounds us leads to a belief in a superior being.'</i></p> <p><i>'By finding God in all things particularly in the created world.'</i></p> <p><i>'Eco spirituality group encourage my involvement in faith community.'</i></p> <p><i>'Involved first and foremost because of the love of God, my desire to please him and give gratitude to him for how much he loves me and does for me in life and having made me.'</i></p> <p><i>'What I have experienced in my life encourages my involvement.'</i></p> <p><i>'I don't find it difficult to be involved but my adult children and husband do. Divorced people feel alienated. My son and daughter though raised in the faith have become disillusioned especially with the dishonesty of the clergy.'</i></p> |

| | | |
|--------------------------|---|---|
| | | <p><i>'Conflict of beliefs.'</i></p> <p><i>'I do not know what to believe anymore.'</i></p> <p><i>'My beliefs that clash with the catholic church.'</i></p> |
| b. Faith | <p>The witness of people of faith supports others faith</p> <p>A desire to pass on the faith</p> <p>Confidence in faith</p> | <p><i>'I am encouraged by the faith of parishioners in their daily lives and by the numbers attending daily Mass on a daily basis.'</i></p> <p><i>'Encouraged to be involved as I am a baptised Christian. I want to follow on that course which baptism began for me and having received confirmation I have been strengthened in faith.'</i></p> <p><i>'Faith supported by changing its relationship with the female congregation. "I will lead her into the desert and speak to her heart."'</i></p> <p><i>'Faith ensured for the future by becoming together and make sure that people are encouraged to attend Mass.'</i></p> <p><i>'People talk about all the bad things in the church but I believe faith and the church are different.'</i></p> <p><i>'Faith is my rock / great comfort from faith.'</i></p> <p><i>'It's my life, my world.'</i></p> <p><i>'It's in my DNA.'</i></p> <p><i>'I appreciate what my faith has given me during my life. I would like to give something back. Promoting faith can be difficult as people do not feel a strong faith or the need for it.'</i></p> |
| c. Feeling Judged | Feeling judged for involvement | <p><i>'People who get involved find themselves with a lot to do because people in general are slow to offer help and sometimes even indulge in criticising those who try to do their best – even calling them nicknames. This is a pity as the church belongs to everybody, whether one practices or not. There is room for everybody.'</i></p> <p><i>'Difficult as you are sometimes afraid to say 'you go to Mass'.'</i></p> |

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| | <p>Hostile attitude of others</p> <p>Separation</p> | <p><i>'My peers might judge me.'</i> <i>'Embarrassment about what others might think. A desire not to stand out.'</i></p> <p><i>'On the bigger issue of being a catholic, it is very difficult to share in current society that I am a practicing Catholic. It is not popular, in particular if you have a prolife stance.'</i></p> <p><i>'We are being persecuted in different ways in the modern world.'</i> <i>'The fear of ridicule and being made fun of from others.'</i></p> <p><i>'Others, including close family being dismissive or derogatory about my continued involvement in local faith community.'</i></p> <p><i>'One could be intimidated for engaging with local faith in our community because it can be viewed as unfashionable and backward.'</i></p> <p><i>'Difficult when people make negative comments about my faith.'</i></p> <p><i>'A lot of my friends don't go to Mass so I don't have people I know.'</i></p> |
| <p>d. Generation Gap k. Senior Grey Generation (combined)</p> | <p>A feeling of loss</p> <p>A need to bring the generations together</p> <p>Consciousness of need for giving good example</p> <p>Barriers</p> | <p><i>'Lost generation a difficulty.'</i></p> <p><i>'Bring older people and younger people together in more occasions to support faith.'</i> <i>'Need to involve young people while respecting the views of older people,'</i></p> <p><i>'By our example we must play a very important role in ensuring that our faith grows in our parish.'</i></p> <p><i>'It is important that the older members give good example.'</i></p> <p><i>'I can't do as much as I would like to.'</i> <i>'Health issues and old age make it difficult.'</i></p> <p><i>'Age group is often older and I am in my mid-twenties.'</i> <i>'Older people don't listen to us young people so much.'</i> <i>'Older people judging'</i></p> |

| | | |
|------------------------------|--|--|
| e. Honesty | Openness | <p><i>'By being open to other views / respecting them while being confident in my beliefs is the way forward.'</i></p> <p><i>'Keep it real.'</i></p> <p><i>'I used to be really involved in my parish, altar server, and Eucharistic minister and represented my parish as a youth volunteer on the Lourdes pilgrimage. I achieved the gold JPPI Award. However as I have been getting older I feel increasing distant from my faith. It has been my experience of late that it is expected of the community to be open, honest and loyal to the church, while the church in general did not return this to communities at times of crisis in the catholic church, where openness and honesty was vital at the time.'</i></p> |
| f. Lack of faith | <p>Uncertainties about church teaching</p> <p>Others causing difficulties for me</p> | <p><i>'I find it hard sometimes to have faith when there is so much bad in the world. I think if this was discussed more at Mass it would help me with my personal faith. Bad things that happened to me in my life with people – sick and dying has slightly made me question my faith at times.'</i></p> <p><i>'Less certainty in beliefs – conflict between faith and religion.'</i></p> <p><i>"Personal beliefs /queries/ uncertainties with the teachings of the Catholic Church, e.g. LGBT Community, pre-marital relationships, abortion, etc. make it difficult.'</i></p> <p><i>'Judgemental people who attend church is a difficulty.'</i></p> <p><i>'Reluctance of my children and husband to go with me.'</i></p> <p><i>'Disbelief of people and dislike of the faith.'</i></p> |
| g. Lack of Motivation | Need for meaningful change | <p><i>'Lack of interaction at Mass.'</i></p> <p><i>'Male dominated decision making and leadership.'</i></p> <p><i>'Rather than "difficult", I say "challenging" – apathy, lack of meaningful engagement with people, lack of feedback, participation, lack of creativity and mission.'</i></p> |

TOPIC 2: Young People

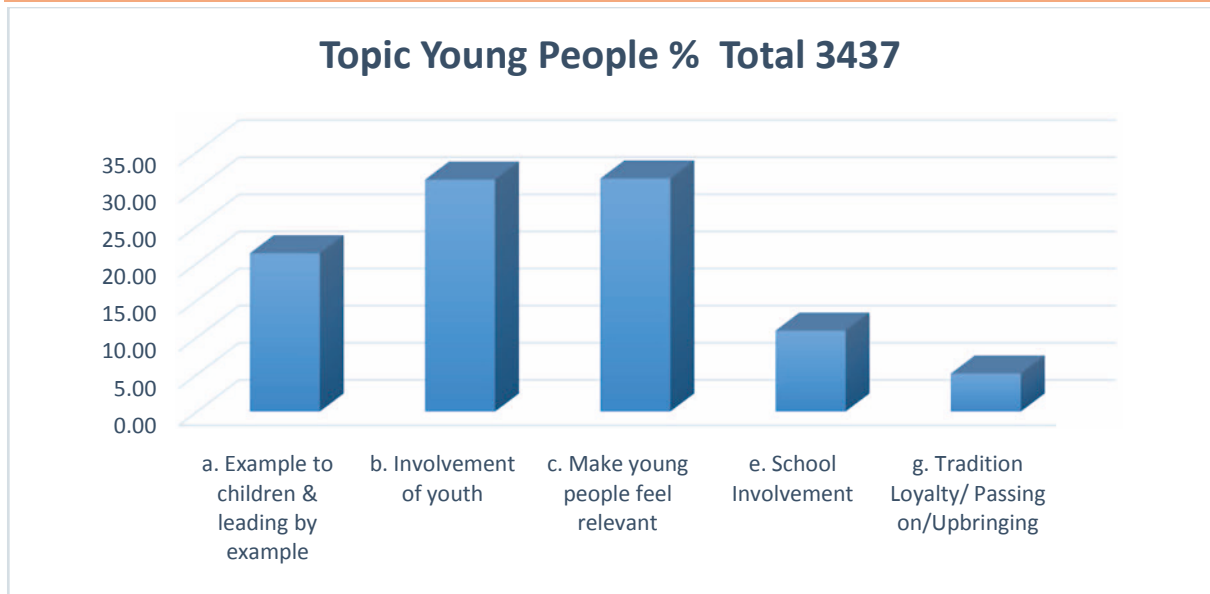


FIGURE 6: TOPIC: YOUNG PEOPLE

| Topic 2: Young People | Key Areas Identified | Sample Quotes |
|--|--|--|
| a. Example to children & leading by example | <p>Role of parents in creating a culture of faith and prayer</p> <p>Role of parish and priests in creating a faith-relevant dynamic in the parish</p> <p>Create faith development opportunities for children and youth</p> <p>Be proud to continue practising despite the negative media</p> | <p><i>It's up to us to keep the faith, practice regularly and set an example for our children</i></p> <p><i>The priests must go to the people, especially the youth</i></p> <p><i>There should be more involvement by them in church activities ..youth masses/family liturgies</i></p> <p><i>There should be a rota of altar servers</i></p> <p><i>There should be youth groups</i> <i>John Paul Awards</i> <i>Lourdes Youth Groups</i></p> <p><i>It is so hard for parents of young children...but we must give good example</i></p> |
| b. Involvement of youth | <p>No future for the Church without engaging our youth</p> <p>Church needs to be creative and appeal to the energetic and youthful voice that is currently absent</p> | <p><i>If there are not significant changes (in next 5 years) in terms of connecting with the youth voice –then the church does not have a future</i></p> <p><i>Redefine Faith to include community building activities including: sport, leisure, social activities, sharing music, reflection, meditation, youth talent awards, youth liturgies, drama, choir & youth volunteer work</i></p> |

| Topic 2: Young People | Key Areas Identified | Sample Quotes |
|--|--|--|
| | <p>Let go of hierarchical power and trust young people to organise themselves...give them opportunities to participate</p> <p>Preach love, compassion, tolerance, humility, inclusion, struggle & support</p> <p>Involve Youth in Parish Work –it offers such hope to others</p> <p>Need for Youth Pastoral Councils</p> <p>Role of Youth Ministry is so important</p> | <p><i>Liturgies for young people by young people...liven up mass</i></p> <p><i>Hold their own prayer meetings with them in control</i></p> <p><i>Transition Year Students could lead a liturgy, do volunteer work in the parish, engage with old people</i></p> <p><i>When we see young people involved it creates tremendous hope and reassurance</i></p> <p><i>I want my children to feel they belong to a place that values people, relationship, support</i></p> <p><i>A Space that belongs to the youth and is encouraged</i></p> <p><i>Youth involved in reading, choir, music, liturgy, post communion reflections</i></p> <p><i>Youth liturgy needed once a month</i> <i>Seinn, Anois and Youth Mass</i> <i>Development of Faith Projects beyond first communion and confirmation</i></p> <p><i>Find some ways to use technology to engage young people</i></p> <p><i>Enable young people to share faith experiences</i></p> |
| <p>c. Young People and Making young people feel relevant</p> <p>(Also linked to involvement of Youth above)</p> | <p>Make contact with young people ...</p> <p>Church-based activities for young people</p> <p>Reaching out to the vulnerable or those that find it difficult to fit in</p> | <p><i>Visits to Schools, Sporting organisations, activities, youth clubs...</i></p> <p><i>Need to organise activities including: Youth masses, choirs, youth parish councils, youth prayer groups, parish volunteers....youth discussion groups ...all of these have the potential to make young people feel relevant</i></p> <p><i>Parishes need to provide safe spaces, youth cafes, places where young people can gather and share and care for each other</i></p> <p><i>Young people feel very negative towards the institutional church so they need to see</i></p> |

| Topic 2: Young People | Key Areas Identified | Sample Quotes |
|-----------------------|--|---|
| | Being listened to... | <p><i>church in a new way in order for them to regain that trust</i></p> <p><i>They need good youth leadership locally from within and outside the church</i></p> |
| | Youth disconnected by abuse scandals and Church cover up | <p><i>Most young people are really good people with good values but the church does not connect with them</i></p> <p><i>Many of them lead better Christian lives than those who are mass goers</i></p> <p><i>Ask young people why they don't attend mass ..but also ask them what do you believe in and harness that</i></p> |
| | Recognise young people as good people | <p><i>Maybe a listening process in schools would be very useful</i></p> <p><i>Technology, Youth liturgies, folk groups, youth councils, youth groups, meditation with fun, parish plans for faith development...</i></p> <p><i>Sports and meet young people where they are at...</i></p> <p><i>Jesus went to the people</i></p> |
| | De-stigmatise the practice of religion for young people | <p><i>Stop complaining about youth disengagement in parishes and do something about it</i></p> |
| | Encouragement of Youth Participation | <p><i>Find a way to bring the message of hope that God will guide, protect and forgive</i></p> <p><i>Help young people get to know Jesus</i></p> <p><i>We need the energy and optimism of youth to be present in our church</i></p> <p><i>Less Judgment and more support needed for young people</i></p> |
| | Gospels of hope and joy | <p><i>One –way communication not appropriate for a new generation</i></p> <p><i>More interaction required</i></p> <p><i>More use of technology</i></p> <p><i>More music and joy</i></p> |

| Topic 2: Young People | Key Areas Identified | Sample Quotes |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| | Mass and its current format doesn't work for young people | <p><i>Rotate young priests around for Mass</i></p> <p><i>Church needs to be welcoming and friendly and genuinely engage with real issues</i></p> <p><i>Reach out to young families</i></p> <p><i>There is a real deficit in appropriate skills to engage young with people</i></p> <p><i>We need to really listen in un-hurried spaces to what young people have to say...we could learn a lot from them</i></p> <p><i>Have speakers at mass who speak on issues relevant to young people</i></p> <p><i>Encourage young people to question Faith and engage them in reflecting on the challenges</i></p> |
| | Train priests and parish leaders in communication with young people | <p><i>We need to harness the voice of sports stars...they are very credible with young people</i></p> <p><i>Many of them have a deep faith and they are good at coping with losing as well as winning...</i></p> <p><i>Young people would love you to listen to them</i></p> <p><i>We need Faith programmes for young people in schools and parishes...these need to be well designed and resourced</i></p> |
| | Engage Sports Stars as role models | <p><i>Have young people involved in designing these programmes</i></p> <p><i>Take a chance on young people ...they won't let you down</i></p> <p><i>Create a modern new church inclusive of young people</i></p> |
| | More Youth Programmes | <p><i>Retreats for young people may be important</i></p> |

| Topic 2: Young People | Key Areas Identified | Sample Quotes |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| d. School Involvement | <p>Role of Faith in schools is very important</p> <p>Parish and schools working closely together</p> <p>Role of teachers and Faith development</p> <p>The 'Listening to Priests Report' also identified the issue of support for teachers and suggests that it requires further discussion.</p> <p>Supporting Religious Education in schools – primary and secondary</p> | <p><i>I believe schools are of the utmost importance in terms of values, role modelling and generating a positive culture for faith development</i></p> <p><i>Schools should invite older people to speak to the children and offer positives to them about being involved in their community</i></p> <p><i>Community leaders in a range of areas should be invited into schools to talk about the importance of community and volunteering</i></p> <p><i>Schools should be partnering more with parish church in terms of liturgy preparation and involvement</i></p> <p><i>I think primary schools have a huge role to play for the future of the church...</i></p> <p><i>Role of school choirs and parish</i></p> <p><i>Remove religion from schools...it is very poorly taught</i></p> <p><i>Religion is caught as well as taught...</i></p> <p><i>I'm not sure that the truths of our faith are being taught in schools...e.g. the ten commandments...</i></p> <p><i>Alive-O programme was not successful ...we need more catechism</i></p> <p><i>New Grow in Love Programme is better</i></p> <p><i>Employ experienced Catechists to teach religion in schools</i></p> <p><i>The role of school liturgies and young people's involvement in same is very important</i></p> <p><i>Have confessions and ceremonies in schools</i></p> <p><i>Priests should visit their local primary schools and get to know the interests and lives of their youngest parishioners</i></p> <p><i>chaplains should be available to all secondary schools</i></p> <p><i>Faith development should be fun and create excitement in children for living a good life... Few teachers are able to create this fun in how they teach.</i></p> |

| Topic 2: Young People | Key Areas Identified | Sample Quotes |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| e. Tradition, loyalty and passing on | <p>Ensuring there is a future church community</p> <p>Giving Young People a sense of the Spiritual</p> <p>Grandchildren and creating a foundation for the future</p> | <p><i>It is our role as parents and grandparents to pass on the faith.</i></p> <p><i>Our parents and grand-parents passed it on to us so we must pass it on to them</i></p> <p><i>There is so much more to life than the material</i></p> <p><i>They have many worries and anxieties facing them and need to see the meaning of life</i></p> <p><i>I want them to know about the commandments and to live good lives</i></p> <p><i>I want them to realize that they can't have everything they want and that life will bring disappointments. Faith will help them cope with these</i></p> <p><i>I try hard with my grand-children. I bring them to mass when I can and say prayers at night to them when I am babysitting them</i></p> <p><i>I hope that they have something to fall back on in years to come</i></p> |

TOPIC 3: Community/Belonging

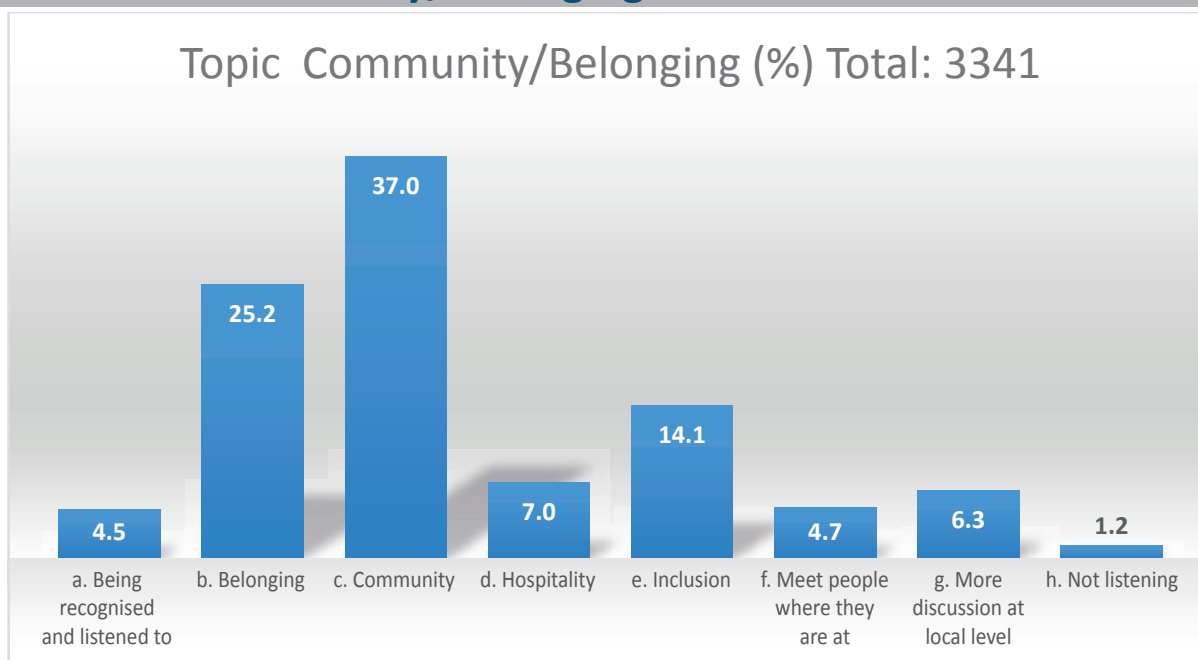


FIGURE 7: TOPIC: COMMUNITY/BELONGING

| Topic 3: Community Belonging | Key areas | Quotes |
|--|---|---|
| a. Being recognised and listened to | <p>The listening experience was very positive.</p> <p>Feedback is important, action must be taken and the listening must continue.</p> | <p><i>"Grateful for being given the opportunity to be heard – great idea that should continue – more events like this."</i></p> <p><i>"Listen more to our suggestions and not discount them if they are not liked by people in authority."</i></p> |
| b. Belonging | <p>Belonging is vital, entails respect for all and must constantly be renewed by invitation.</p> <p>Belonging to a faith community is encouraged by like-minded people and discouraged by cliques that may exclude.</p> <p>Belonging means reaching out to all.</p> | <p><i>"I want my children to get that sense of belonging and to have something to hold on to when times get tough."</i></p> <p><i>"Connection through the school and sacraments encourages involvement."</i></p> <p><i>"For many the sense of belonging is missing."</i></p> <p><i>"Being a blow-in makes it hard for newcomers to become an integrated member of the community."</i></p> |

| Topic 3: Community Belonging | Key areas | Quotes |
|---|--|--|
| c. Community | <p>Community involves receiving and giving back.</p> <p>The active faith community, in the main, revolves around meeting people for the celebration of the Sunday Mass.</p> <p>The faith community needs to be connected to the wider community.</p> | <p><i>"It is nice to gather as a community and pray together"</i></p> <p><i>"Being involved enables me to 'give back' to the community"</i></p> <p><i>"Whilst faith is central and led through the Church, living it comes through the community and activities that community can be involved in."</i></p> <p><i>"Please interact outside the walls of the church."</i></p> |
| d. Hospitality | <p>The key message here is that there would be a cup of tea after Mass or a social event on a regular basis where people can meet and new comers made welcome.</p> | <p><i>"Every community should have a post Mass cup of tea."</i></p> <p><i>"A welcoming Parish encourages involvement."</i></p> <p><i>"Meet and greet encourages involvement."</i></p> |
| e. Inclusion | <p>It is necessary to include in the parish LGBT people, People with Disability, the Travelling Community, all Nationalities, the Divorced, Separated, Single and Childless.</p> | <p><i>"A more inclusive church, a more open and tolerant and non-judgemental church would allow people to feel they belong."</i></p> <p><i>"Remember we are living in a world with different types of families and learn to accept this."</i></p> |
| f. Meet people where they are at | <p>We need to meet people where they are at, using language in our liturgies that is understandable, thus making them relevant.</p> | <p><i>"Coming down to ordinary people's level – be inclusive and welcoming..."</i></p> <p><i>"It's difficult when I don't understand the meaning of certain prayers or religious sayings."</i></p> |
| g. More discussion at local level | <p>More discussion on faith matters which will generate a confidence in people to engage more fully with their faith and so enhance faith development.</p> | <p><i>"Meet in groups and share what you believe would support my faith."</i></p> <p><i>"There is a lack of discussion at local level."</i></p> |
| h. Not listening | <p>There are people who feel that the Church is not listening to them.</p> | <p><i>"Not being listened to when I voice my opinion."</i></p> <p><i>"We need 'real listening' followed by 'real' taking on board of the valuable ideas generated."</i></p> |
| i. Safety and Security of Older people | <p>The Church must recognise that age and infirmity can make full participation in Church life very difficult.</p> | <p><i>"Being an old age pensioner, I cannot attend meetings after dark."</i></p> <p><i>"Old age makes it difficult to be involved."</i></p> |

TOPIC 4: Family

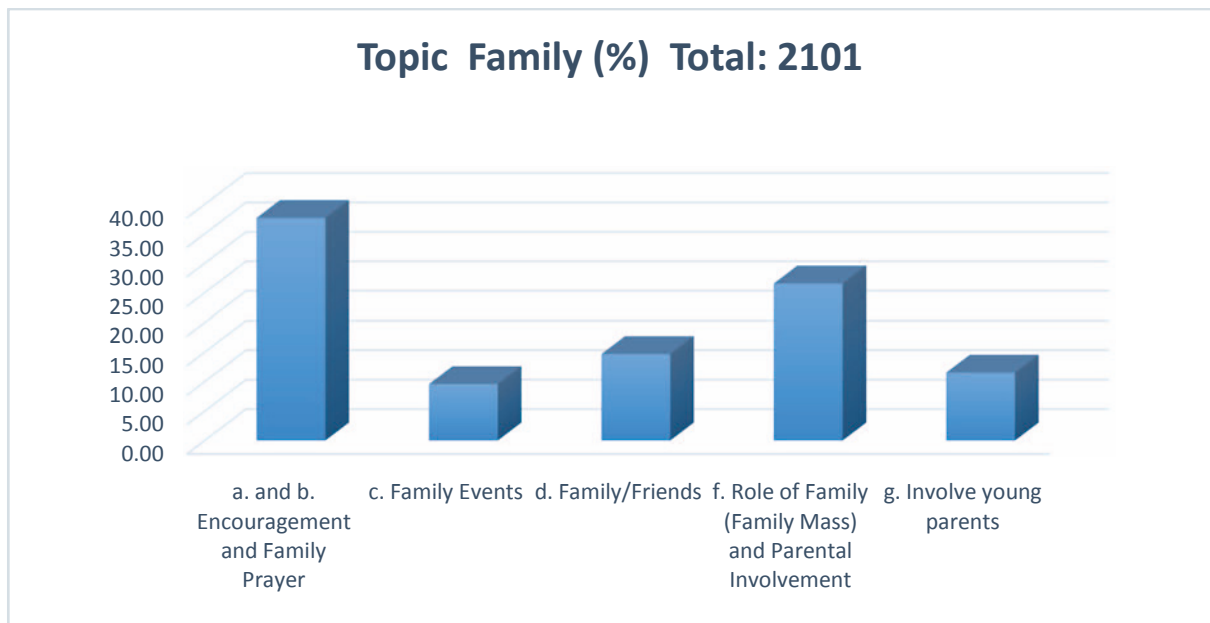


FIGURE 8: TOPIC: FAMILY

| Topic 4: Family | Key areas identified | Quotes |
|--|--|---|
| Combine a. Family Prayer and b. Encouragement | <p>Parents/family key to encouragement.</p> <p>Role of grandparents is very significant.</p> <p>Role of family prayer.</p> | <p><i>“encourage our family by example – non-judgemental - loving, caring, sharing.” / “family focused Mass – make it real for everyone.” / “try to involve people firstly in what interests them and work from there to add on spirituality”. / “People need to be encouraged and included – not judged.. a lot of grey areas.” / “family values are important so I am encouraged to be involved.” / “faith begins at home.”</i></p> <p><i>“nanny and grandad.” / “my nanny and my family support my faith.” / “intergenerational involvement, grandparents.” / “role of grandparents not to be overlooked.” / “grandparents encourage.”</i></p> <p><i>“have a Bible in the house.” / “promote family prayer to ensure the faith into the future...” / prayer as a family supports faith.” / “make Mass more family oriented.”</i></p> |

| Topic 4: Family | Key areas identified | Quotes |
|-------------------|---|---|
| c. Family events | <p>Make church events more family friendly.</p> <p>New approaches needed.</p> <p>Church sacraments/events are an encouragement.</p> | <p><i>“activities with family and children needed”. / “ensure faith into the future with family oriented activities.” / “get youth groups and families with young children involved in parish and church activities.” / “make it more family friendly, encourage family gatherings maybe once a month after Mass.” / “make the church more open to families.”</i></p> <p><i>“Seinn project.” / “get families involved in reading at Mass and help with church planning.” / “Bible reading/stories for children. Meditation and explanation of Mass.” / “no a la carte approach for sacraments.”</i></p> <p><i>“christenings, communions, marriages, burials encourage me to be involved.” / “faith supported at weddings/funerals.” / “something that is family friendly encourages involvement.”</i></p> |
| d. Family/friends | <p>Family and friends are sources of influence, support or encouragement.</p> <p>Church life provides opportunities for family/friends.</p> <p>Need to look at roles of church(parish)/school/family.</p> | <p><i>“family and friends support faith. They are also involved so therefore there needs to be a community feel about Mass and church.” / “faith supported if you have a friend with similar ideas.” / “encouraged to be involved if friends are there.” / “my parents make it difficult for me to be involved in the local faith community because they are not involved.”)</i></p> <p><i>“involved to pray for family and friends.” / “involved to meet family and friends.” / “being involved allows me to be a good role model for other people, especially my children.”)</i></p> <p><i>“Sacraments being more of a parish than a school event will encourage parents to take more responsibility and instill the importance in their children at home and in the community.” / “Parish and young families – continue contact after baptism.” / “I am part of my community as I try to reach out to my</i></p> |

| Topic 4: Family | Key areas identified | Quotes |
|---|---|--|
| | Look at our understanding of family. | <p><i>family, children, grandchildren, especially, the needy ones with social problems.” / “support for marriage needed.”)</i></p> <p><i>“ Definition of family. All families treated equally.” / “the concept of “family” needs to be broadened, to accept all sorts of families, and not just husband and wife with children.”</i></p> |
| e. Parental involvement And f. Role of Family (Mass) | <p>Parental example is essential.</p> <p>Parents need to take responsibility.</p> <p>Support needed for parents in their role of faith formation.</p> <p>Family Mass needs to be promoted but well planned.</p> | <p><i>“encouraging parents to get children involved at an young age.” / “by bringing children to Mass and teaching them prayers.” / “if my parents were involved I probably would be too.” / “parents have a duty from baptism to encourage our children that church is an extension of our family.”</i></p> <p><i>“without parents playing an ever increasing role in its Christian Doctrine in the home, it will not survive.” / “I want faith to impact on my children, I have a sense of responsibility.” / “Personally I don’t get involved. However I ensure my children go to Mass each Sunday and read and serve.”</i></p> <p><i>“Parental faith formation in home, using Bible stories.” / “Parish getting together.” / “Sunday school for children with highly trained catechists.” / “important to have talks for young parents given by priests.” / “parents don’t have to think.”</i></p> <p><i>“Family Mass is all about Littles. We teens are family too. Have family Mass that teens have planned and can participate in.” / “make family Mass more relevant to young people not just children- include LGBT, divorced, families with disabled members.” / “The family is the most important cradle of the faith, so Family Masses and grandparents and grandchildren events important.”</i></p> |

| Topic 4: Family | Key areas identified | Quotes |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| g. Involve young parents | <p>Vital group to keep involved and supported.</p> <p>Support needed.</p> | <p><i>“give them something to cherish about spirituality and faith.” / “engage with young parents especially at milestones in their lives – birth/baptism.” / “let young parents have a voice in what way they would like to have Mass be delivered.” / “young parents be asked to set up a group to discuss their ideas for the future of the church...”</i></p> <p><i>“ Have fun days for children. Make coming to Mass attractive.”/ “put some programme in place for new younger families.” / “... I think it is important to support these with catechetical material.”</i></p> |
| h. Other (2) | <i>“getting more involved in the Church.”</i> | <i>“I have a young family and I like to set a positive example for them.”</i> |

TOPIC 5: Celebration / Liturgy

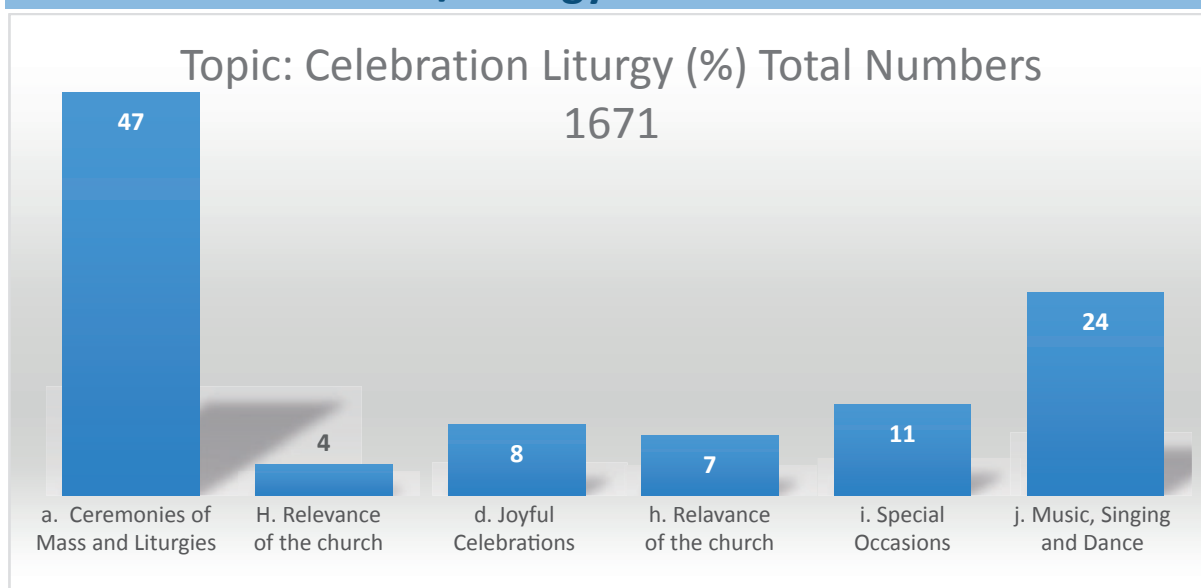


FIGURE 9: TOPIC: CELEBRATION/LITURGY

| TOPIC 5: Celebration and Liturgy | Key Areas Identified | Quotes |
|---|---|--|
| a. Ceremonies for different specific groups/ Celebration of Mass | There is a strong desire for themed Masses. | <i>Have special Masses for involving a local hurling club, soccer club. Mass for Alzheimer's/Dementia patients. (Mentioned quite frequently), autism friendly Mass, folk Masses, Masses with children. Family Masses once a month, grandparents' Mass etc.</i> |
| | There is also a desire for liturgies other than Mass. | <i>Ensure faith into the future with liturgies that are prayerful, simple, very reverent. A lack of creative liturgies and variety are difficulties. Faith supported by participation in church celebrations with relevant interactive liturgies to encourage both personal and community participation.</i> |
| | These liturgies (including themed Masses) need to be varied, thematic and focused on particular groups and occasions. | <i>To support faith have religious gatherings other than Mass e.g. Carol service, nativity plays, etc. Youth Masses once a month with music and organised in consultation with young people. Taize style services and meditation prayer should be more widely available in parishes.</i> |

| TOPIC 5: Celebration and Liturgy | Key Areas Identified | Quotes |
|--|--|---|
| b .and c. Homilies (good and bad) | Homilies are important. | <i>Have impactful and meaningful homilies that people will pass on to their children. I always feel better having listened to the Gospel and the sermon. When I got married nearly 20 years ago the priest used three words in his homily – care, share and be fair – we often recount those words.</i> |
| | Homilies need to be relevant and speak to people's lives. | <i>Sermons to be more relevant and meaningful to present day realities. Relevant sermons touching the lives of people. Make homily relevant to modern day life and worries.</i> |
| | Homilies need to be delivered in precise, simple and encouraging language. | <i>Sermons not too long and to the point. Not too long giving the sermon as younger people are turned off by this. Good and encouraging preaching supports my faith.</i> |
| d. Joyful Celebrations /Special Occasions /Music /Singing | Music and singing help people in their faith. | <i>Music and singing in church makes faith more meaningful/prayer through song/music is very powerful. Choir encourages my involvement in my local faith community. Music draws people to Church and helps us to pray.</i> |
| | Emphasis in our liturgy should be on joy/hope/encouragement. | <i>There needs to be a feel good factor to our faith to ensure it lives on. To ensure faith into the future more lively and more involved liturgies. We are relying on the liturgy in the parish to keep people in touch with the church and it helps a lot of people.</i> |
| | Special occasions are important to people. | <i>Masses for special occasions encourages me to stay involved. When there is a special Mass like a Mass for Healing, November Mass for the Dead it encourages me to be involved. Community involvement and sense of belonging come from celebrating special occasions.</i> |
| <i>Arising from the 'Listening to Priests Report' the issue of streamlining Masses throughout the diocese requires discussion.</i> | | |

TOPIC 6: Faith Development

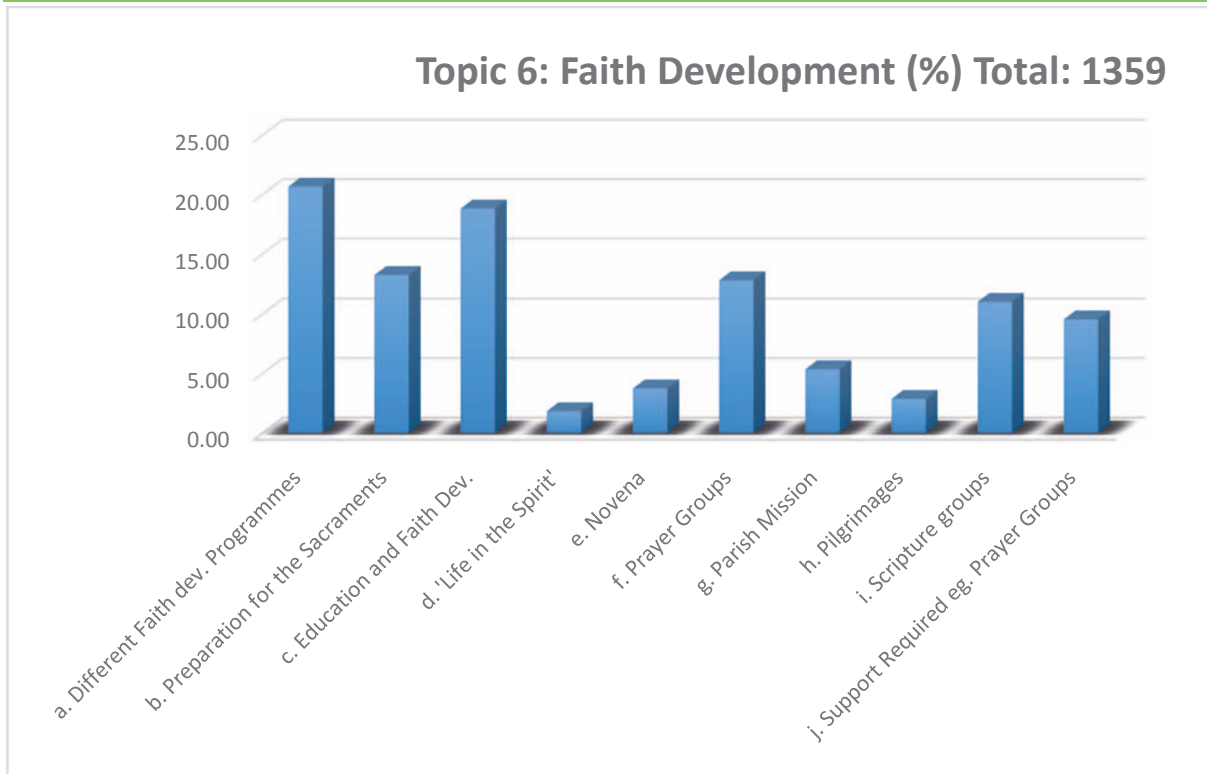


FIGURE 10: TOPIC: FAITH DEVELOPMENT

| TOPIC 6: Faith Development | Key Areas Identified | Quotes |
|--|--|--|
| A. Different faith development programmes | <p>Welcome and encourage participation and faith formation for all age groups.</p> <p>Think outside the box/new ideas/new ways/initiatives.</p> <p>Promote the social and community aspect of our Christian faith.</p> | <p><i>"As a parish we will get to know what our religion is about – to know the inner self- the real self – the God within. To begin again to learn about faith in a new way- not about feeling sorry or feeling shameful. Faith is not just about going to Mass but about reaching out to everyone and accepting all people."</i></p> |
| B. Preparation for sacraments | <p>Meaningful preparation for the sacraments.</p> <p>Opportunity and time to educate the whole family.</p> <p>Involve all - parish, home and school.</p> | <p><i>"I want the Church there for my rites of passage, my marriage and that my children receive the sacraments in a church."</i></p> <p><i>"Communion and confirmation preparation should be taken out of the schools. It would mean that families would have to come together and organise these occasions. Give them the responsibility."</i></p> |

| TOPIC 6: Faith Development | Key Areas Identified | Quotes |
|--|--|---|
| C. Learning/education faith development | <p>Call for ongoing, relevant and up to date education for all.</p> <p>Discussion groups, courses, Sunday school, Bible and Biscuits/ prophets and pizzas.</p> | <p><i>"If the Bible was explained more, I'd have belief and I would involve myself in the local faith community."</i></p> <p><i>"To facilitate educational faith-based opportunities in community, with proper resources and trained leadership."</i></p> <p><i>"So many of us left school with little knowledge of our faith.... We cannot pass on what we don't understand and appreciate ourselves."</i></p> <p><i>"Need to spread the Good News – it's not all doom and gloom."</i></p> |
| D. Life in the spirit | <p>Talk less about the demise of faith.</p> <p>Let faith find its own life in each of us.</p> | <p><i>"Keep praising and thanking God. Demonstrate empathy with people who are suffering."</i></p> |
| E. Novena | <p>Novenas are a very positive experience and assist in faith development.</p> <p>Less emphasis on novenas and more on faith formation and scripture sharing.</p> | <p><i>"I love going to the Novena every year. "</i></p> |
| F. Prayer groups | <p>Various types of prayer groups/pastoral groups to support faith – for different age groups e.g. meditation, Lectio Divina, Taipei.</p> <p>Opportunities for sharing faith other than mass - faith buddies/study buddies – more creative: and less conservative.</p> <p>Emphasis on Family Prayer.</p> | <p><i>"I find support in groups, the support of different people I find, is a source of strength."</i></p> <p><i>"Prayer groups in university. Up to 45 young people from UCD and Trinity gather for a Holy Hour. We are the future of the church."</i></p> |
| G. Parish mission | <p>Parish mission and Annual Retreat days to support faith.</p> <p>Variety of speakers with interesting life experience / faith journeys.</p> | <p><i>"Faith needs to be nourished and I feel our parish needs a mission at intervals to stimulate our faith."</i></p> |

| TOPIC 6: Faith Development | Key Areas Identified | Quotes |
|---|--|--|
| H. Pilgrimages | <p>Pilgrimages support faith.</p> <p>Pilgrimages/religious trips to holy places in Ireland or local holy wells /mass rock etc.</p> <p>Involving young people in the organisation of the events.</p> | <p><i>"Give young people an opportunity to see the practice of faith in a different light."</i></p> |
| I. Scripture groups | <p>Need for meaningful scripture study and sharing for all age groups – application to life.</p> <p>Bible classes/Sunday school/cell groups/ Gospel study.</p> <p>Trained leadership needed.</p> | <p><i>"I find it hard to understand the Bible."</i></p> <p><i>"Bible study where people can meet and talk would support faith development. "</i></p> <p><i>"Bible study is not a strong point in the Catholic Church."</i></p> |
| J. Support required e.g. Prayer groups | | <p><i>All points already covered in previous sections.</i></p> |
| K. Other | <p>Real dialogue on issues that impact us/social teachings/moral teaching, etc.</p> <p>Parish/community events/more inclusive/reaching out.</p> <p>A focus on age appropriate groups e.g. parents of younger children.</p> <p>Church needs to update – be more relevant.</p> <p>Greater involvement of lay people.</p> | <p><i>Already covered in other sections.</i></p> |

TOPIC 7: Leadership

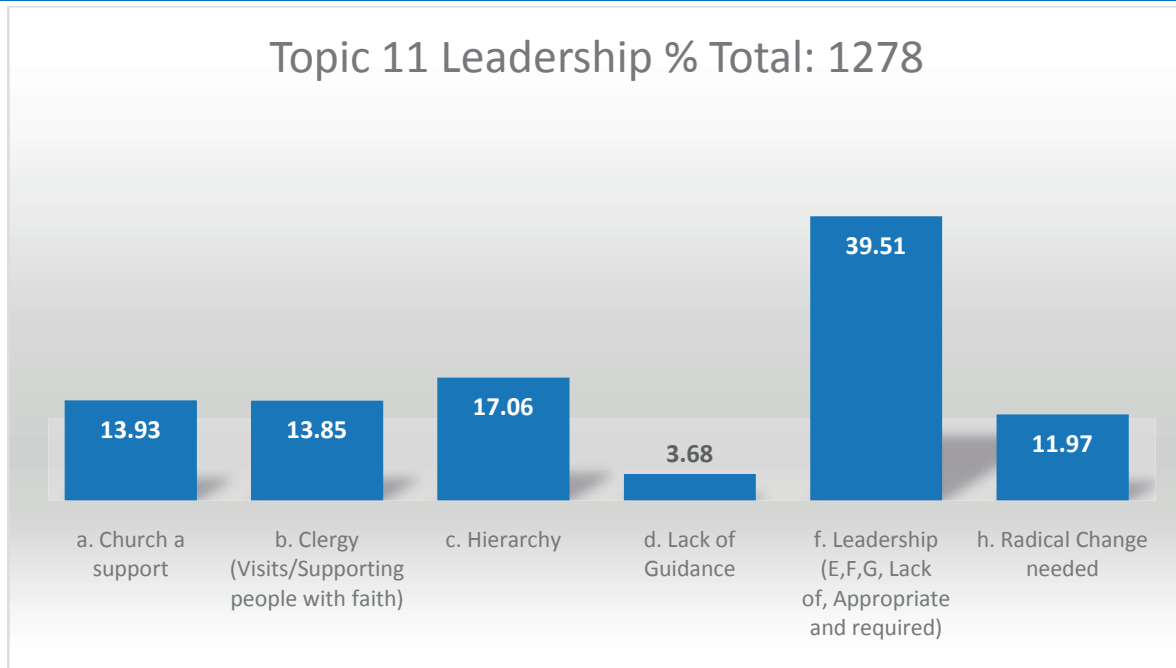


FIGURE 11: TOPIC: LEADERSHIP

| TOPIC 7: Leadership | Key Areas Identified | Sample Quotes |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| a. Church a support | <p>Priests as a source of support in times of need.</p> <p>Pope Francis has generated much positivity in his humility which needs to filter down to all in leadership positions.</p> | <p><i>"The Church has been all I have in tough times, in getting through the losses of my own family members."</i></p> <p><i>"We need our Church. We need a moral compass for Society, but it must be seen in a more understanding light."</i></p> <p><i>"The Church should practice humility and openness."</i></p> <p><i>"Make us feel the Church cares for people struggling."</i></p> |
| b. Clergy | <p>Visitation of homes by priests would be welcome.</p> <p>Priests should have a more caring attitude to people who have difficulties in their lives.</p> <p>Care of the priests should also be a consideration.</p> | <p><i>"We need clergy who are genuinely interested in parishioners, their struggles, strengths, and interested in working side-by-side in matters of faith and faith celebrations."</i></p> <p><i>"Ensure faith into the future by priests getting to know parishioners ... visit families... may be hard as priests are so busy."</i></p> |

| TOPIC 7: Leadership | Key Areas Identified | Sample Quotes |
|---------------------------------|--|--|
| c. Hierarchy | <p>A Listening Church</p> <p>A more humble Church</p> <p>More acceptance of where people are at in their personal lives.</p> <p>Need to modernise and be open to change.</p> | <p><i>"It is one-way traffic..... a reluctance to dilute power"</i></p> <p><i>"... a more modern outlook needs to be created....more open and broad-minded to certain beliefs and groups."</i></p> <p><i>"The Church needs to open its arms to anyone who wants to practice their faith, be up-to-date with people's lives e.g. unmarried families."</i></p> <p><i>"The Church needs to show more remorse for wrong-doings."</i></p> |
| d. Lack of guidance | <p>Priest needed as a source of guidance.</p> <p>Top down leadership is outdated.</p> | <p><i>"The lack of a parish priest is really worrying.... for the young families of the future."</i></p> |
| e. Leadership | <p>Appropriate leadership required.</p> <p>A visit from the Bishop on a more regular basis</p> <p>To ensure faith into the future, more variation in leadership needed – male, female, young and old</p> | <p><i>"Good leadership will support faith."</i></p> <p><i>"Faith ensured into the future by inspirational leaders."</i></p> |
| f. Radical change needed | <p>Conversion of mindset from institutional Church with laity 'helping out' to the priesthood of all baptised</p> <p>Inclusivity of all.</p> | <p><i>"The needs to be a whole conversion of mindset on the part of the institutional Church.....not telling us what to do, feel or behave, but to listen to what we do feel, believe and trust in the Holy Spirit."</i></p> <p><i>"Does the Church trust me as a lay person to take decisions / responsibility?"</i></p> |

TOPIC 8: Time

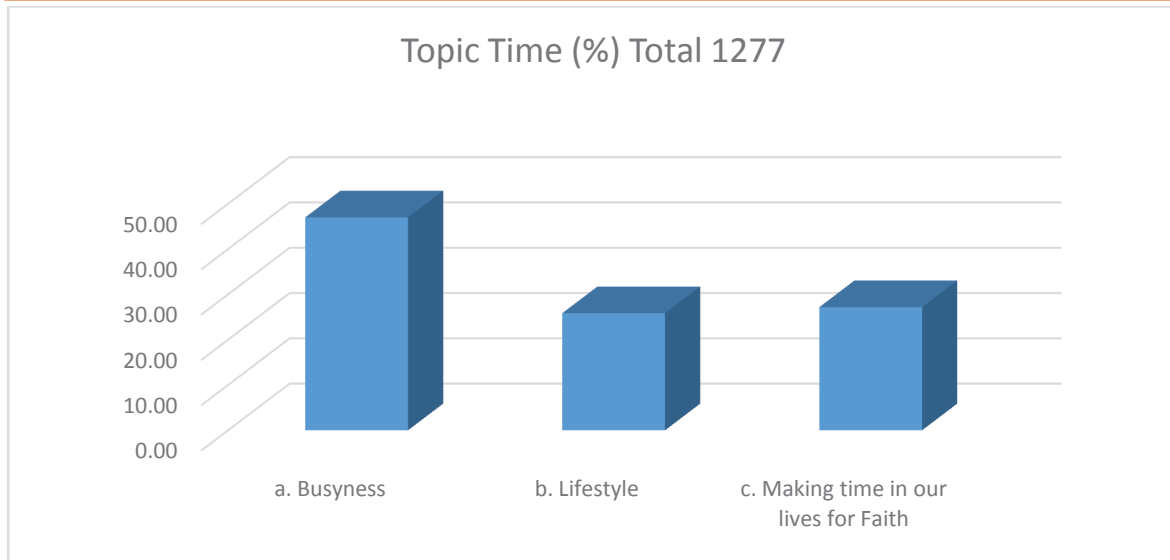


FIGURE 12: TOPIC: TIME

| TOPIC 8: Time | Key Areas Identified (per heading) | Quotes |
|----------------------|---|---|
| a. Busyness | <p>People are much busier and have far more options open to them at weekends than heretofore.</p> <p>Different good activities are competing with each other for time.</p> | <p><i>"A busy life has made it difficult for everyone including myself. Too much going on in the world today."</i></p> <p><i>"Life is very busy. Not enough time anymore to be involved in a meaningful way."</i></p> <p><i>"Sport and my family commitments make it difficult to be involved."</i></p> |
| b. Lifestyle | <p>Because work takes up most of the week, family time, sport time, social time, study time and faith time are vying for space.</p> <p>The need to work out priorities in living your life.</p> | <p><i>"School during the day, sports in the evening, babysitting at weekends."</i></p> <p><i>"Time clashes with my social and personal life, don't want to go sometimes because I'm lazy."</i></p> <p><i>"Clash of games time and training with Mass times."</i></p> |
| c. Faith Time | <p>Need to try and avoid Mass times clashing with other events.</p> <p>Need for time management in people's lives rather than going with the popular flow.</p> | <p><i>"G.A.A. has taken over from Sunday Mass."</i></p> <p><i>"Difficult, as it's about my own personal management of time."</i></p> <p><i>"Time, events, other hobbies and interests make it difficult to be involved."</i></p> |

TOPIC 9: Clergy

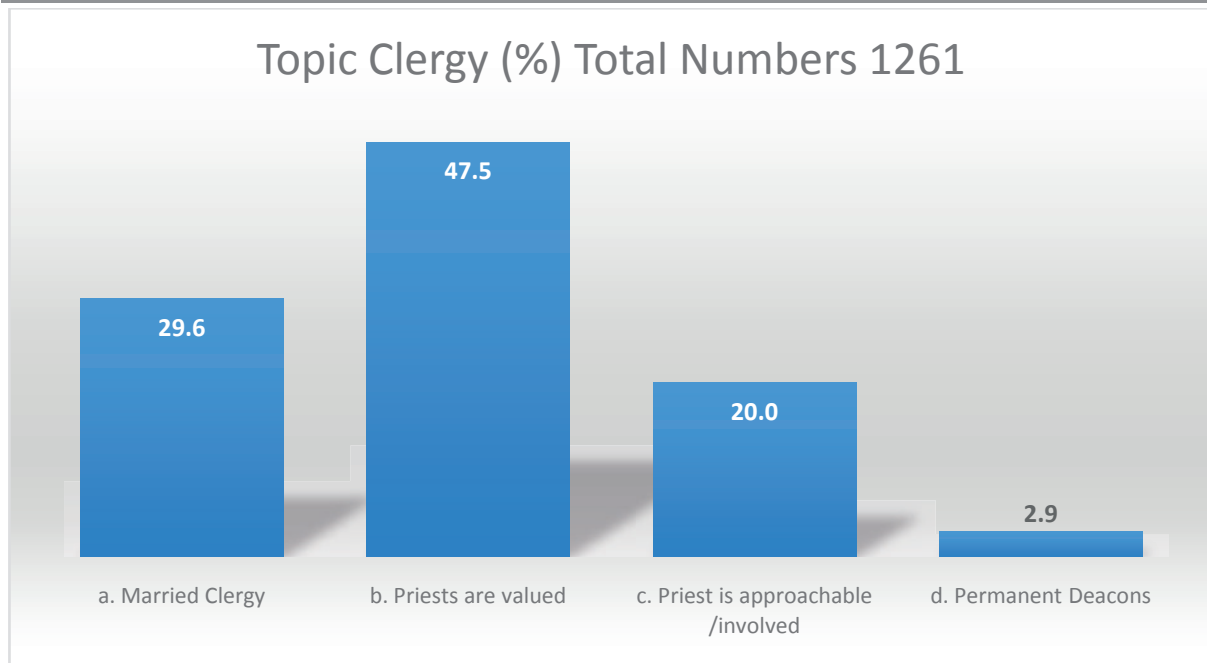


FIGURE 13: TOPIC: CLERGY

| Topic 9: Clergy | Key Areas Identified (Per heading) | Quotes |
|--|--|---|
| a. Priests should be allowed to marry | <p>Leave priests marry and have families.</p> <p>This would make them more in touch with reality.</p> <p>The inflexibility of the hierarchy and the manmade laws has created this.</p> | <p><i>"Allowing priests to marry would help a lot of people to get involved."</i></p> <p><i>"Allow priests to marry and be more involved in family life – happier life for priests and their family."</i></p> <p><i>"Married priests would have a better understanding of life and all aspects of it."</i></p> <p><i>"Some of the laws of the Church are manmade over the years."</i></p> |

| Topic 9: Clergy | Key Areas Identified (Per heading) | Quotes |
|---|---|--|
| b. Priests are valued | <p>The priests encourages and supports me and my faith.</p> <p>People need to help and support their priest.</p> <p>Priests need to be one of the people.</p> | <p><i>"Encouraged by our wonderful PP."</i></p> <p><i>"Encouraged by the priests I have encountered and who have ministered to me."</i></p> <p><i>"We need to support our clergy."</i></p> <p><i>"I want to help and support the clergy."</i></p> <p><i>"The priests to take part in our local goings on – whether going to matches, visiting houses after a First Communion etc. Meeting the priest outside the weekly church setting."</i></p> <p><i>"Seeing the priest around the community."</i></p> |
| c. Priest is approachable / involved | <p>Our priests are encouraging and supportive.</p> <p>Our priests are approachable.</p> <p>Some priests are not approachable.</p> <p>Priests should be aware of how they speak to people.</p> | <p><i>"Having a parish priest who is always available and ready to listen."</i></p> <p><i>"I have always found the clergy helpful and approachable."</i></p> <p><i>"An amazing PP, animated man – he knows and loves his people and parish."</i></p> <p><i>"Priests are not in touch with their parishioners. A bad priest in a parish for decades can do untold damage."</i></p> <p><i>"Priest is always giving out and complaining. Doesn't appreciate those turning up."</i></p> <p><i>"Made to feel unwelcome by the priest."</i></p> <p><i>"Priests need to be less dictatorial."</i></p> <p><i>"They need to be more open and accept that opinion may vary."</i></p> |

| Topic 9: Clergy | Key Areas Identified (Per heading) | Quotes |
|---|---|---|
| d. Permanent deacons | <p>Deacons can perform baptism, marriage and funeral rites.</p> <p>There should be male and female deacons.</p> | <p><i>“Use a deacon system so that those suitably qualified can perform marriage, baptism and funeral rites.”</i></p> <p><i>“It’s reported in media that we are looking to ordain male deacons – what can a deacon do that a baptised, practising, faith-filled woman cannot do in the ministry of the Church?”</i></p> |
| <p>Arising from the Weafer Listening to Priests Report the issue of the care of priests is crucial in view of increased workload, changes in Irish society, the challenge of working with laity and the clerical abuse scandals. The issues of new models of administration, shared secretarial support as well as support with financial management and maintenance of buildings require further discussion.</p> | | |

TOPIC 10: Lay Involvement

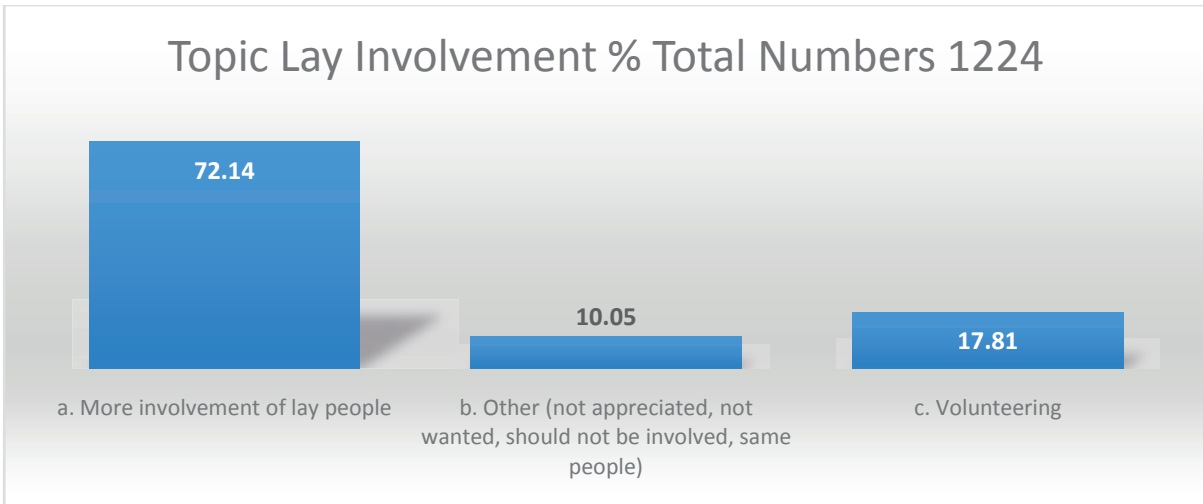


FIGURE 14: TOPIC: LAY INVOLVEMENT

| Topic 10: Lay Involvement | Key Areas Identified | Quotes |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| a. More involvement of Lay People | Lay People to be more involved in meaningful ways, i.e. in making decisions and in being given responsibility. | <p><i>"Church must involve the laity in an active way."</i></p> <p><i>"Provide a role for more active involvement at parish level and allow greater personal input from parishioners. There aren't enough opportunities to become more involved."</i></p> <p><i>"The church is the people – let the people take a more active role."</i></p> |
| | Lay People need to be asked, encouraged and much depends on the attitude of the priest and parishioners to greater lay involvement. | <p><i>"Maybe need to be asked, encouraged."</i></p> <p><i>"Priests have a lot of control over what may or might happen. Need to open up to new voices at all levels and allow room for the Spirit."</i></p> |
| | <p>Training of lay people for ministry is required.</p> <p><i>Arising from the Weafer Listening to Priests Report the issue of Training for Lay Ministry was raised for further discussion and priests say they need training to work with lay people.</i></p> | <p><i>"Good lay leaders who are well trained and approachable who can get through to the young and older people."</i></p> <p><i>"Train people for pastoral leadership."</i></p> <p><i>"With older priests and falling numbers more lay people will have to be trained for parish duty."</i></p> |

| Topic 10: Lay Involvement | Key Areas Identified | Quotes |
|--|--|--|
| | Parish Pastoral Councils or Pastoral Groups need to be formed. | <p><i>"I would value a pastoral council in the parish so that the talent and ability of motivated and capable lay people can be utilised."</i></p> <p><i>"Need a more inclusive approach, need to have a say in how the future of the Church is structured. We need a Pastoral Council. Need to affirm people's efforts."</i></p> <p><i>"We of this generation have a duty to work and plan for the future of our parish re. changes etc. A pastoral care group is important."</i></p> |
| b.,d., e., & f. combined – other Obstacles to Lay Involvement | The same people are involved all the time. | <i>"It seems to be the same people who do everything, this is hard to change and people need to step down."</i> |
| | The feeling that lay people are not wanted. | <p><i>"Only a very small carefully curated selection of old-fashioned and traditional parishioners' are involved."</i></p> <p><i>"We as young people are not wanted as people believe that we bring/change which isn't always the case."</i></p> |
| | Lay involvement is not appreciated. | <p><i>"I think the older more religious members make it difficult to get us involved, especially, if change is needed."</i></p> <p><i>"Probably more deep appreciation from clergy for those already in lay ministry."</i></p> |
| c. Volunteering | People are willing to volunteer. | <p><i>"I want to use the gifts God has given me and pass them on to other people I met along the way of life. I love being involved."</i></p> <p><i>"The chance for me to live the gospel, to help people, to share, to treat people as I would like to be treated myself."</i></p> <p><i>"Involvement in the community is good for the person as well as the community."</i></p> |
| | Some people are shy and unsure of how to become involved. | <p><i>"Being too shy to speak up and taking part in parish work – meetings are a difficulty."</i></p> <p><i>"Make it easier to volunteer."</i></p> |

TOPIC 11: Women

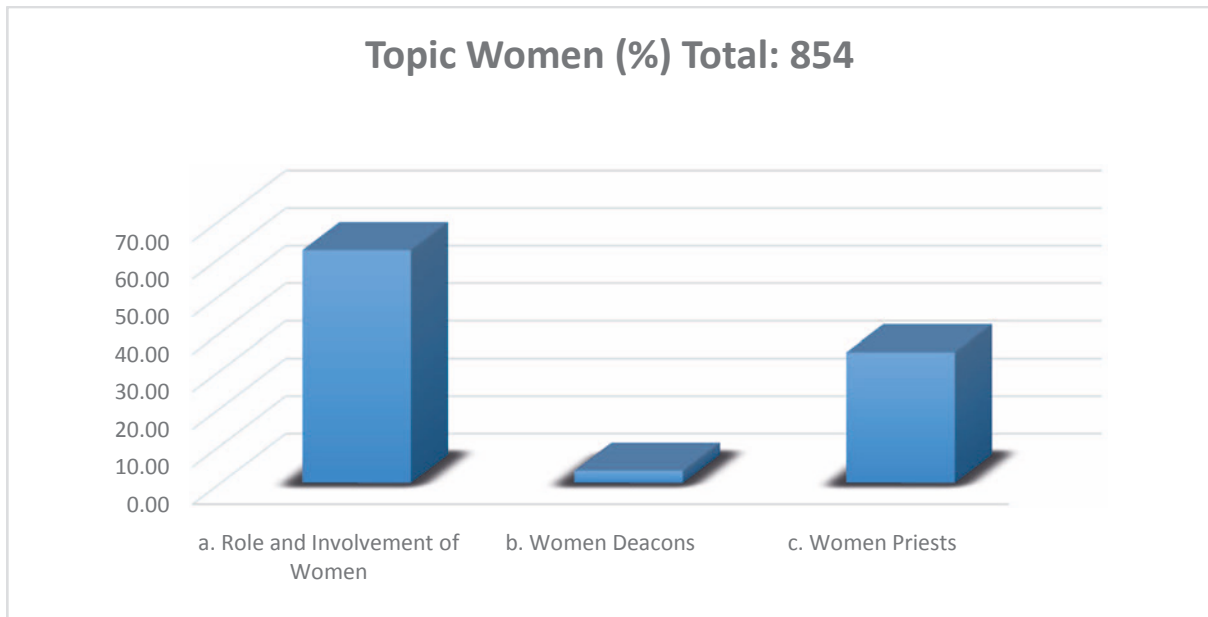


FIGURE 15: TOPIC: WOMEN

| Topic 11: Women | Key Areas | Quotes |
|---|---|---|
| a. Role and involvement of Women | Women should have a more active role. | <p><i>Lack of meaningful role of women makes it difficult to be involved - increased role for women will ensure faith into the future.</i></p> <p><i>Women need to be involved in leadership and decision making.</i></p> <p><i>The Church needs to wake up about the role of women in the Church - a huge resource not tapped into.</i></p> |
| | The role of women in passing on the faith. | <p><i>I believe it is women and mothers in particular who have done great work in passing on the faith.</i></p> <p><i>I feel there is a lack of respect for women in the hierarchial church - consider mostly women teachers in our primary schools, mothers try to pass on the faith, congregations are mainly women and church ministers are mostly women.</i></p> <p><i>I strongly feel the Church authorities should give a far stronger for women in the Church as in most parishes they are the backbone of the Church.</i></p> |
| | Women need to be seen as equal in the church. | <p><i>Gender issues. God created man and woman - man has forgotten that. Recognise women as equals. We are all equal in the eyes of God. Man needs to be reminded.</i></p> |

| Topic 11: Women | Key Areas | Quotes |
|-------------------------|---|---|
| | | <p><i>As a woman, I feel we are treated like second class citizens, if the Church needs to be cleaned or flowers arranged. The Church is male dominated and In 2018 that can be a hard pill to swallow.</i></p> <p><i>I find it difficult to be involved in a Church that does not value women equally...the Gospel about a woman submitting to her husband and obeying her husband...it is NOT the way I raise my children nor how I believe society, or my church should be.</i></p> |
| | Need to encourage women to be involved. | <p><i>Women should have a more important role, and should be encouraged.</i></p> <p><i>Women's role very much needs to be welcome.</i></p> <p><i>Females have been involved over last few years - this needs to be expanded.</i></p> |
| | Discrimination is hurtful. | <p><i>I can't prescribe to a Church that treats me as a woman, a second class member. I would have been previously involved both with everyday life of the Church and in particular young people. It can be very difficult for me as a woman, mother, being told what to do by celibate, elderly men!</i></p> <p><i>The Church discriminates against women, women have as much to offer as men.</i></p> <p><i>As a woman, I feel we are treated like second class citizens, if the Church needs to be cleaned or flowers arranged. The Church is male dominated and In 2018 that can be a hard pill to swallow.</i></p> |
| b. Women Deacons | | <p><i>What can a deacon do that a baptized practising faithfilled woman cannot do in the ministry of the church?</i></p> <p><i>Women deacons would give women the opportunity to meet the spiritual needs of the parish.</i></p> <p><i>Since women make up the bulk of the church membership, it is incumbent upon the present leaders (where are you?) to make it possible to have women deacons, preachers - why can't a lay person give the sermon from time to time.</i></p> |

| Topic 11: Women | Key Areas | Quotes |
|------------------|---|---|
| c. Women Priests | Serious consideration needs to be given to the option of women priests. | <p><i>Let women be priests. Many women have great faith and they should have an equal say on religious matters and give their thoughts the same as priests do allow women priests please. Open the doors of the church and let help come in especially women priests. Seriously consider alternatives to the present way of membership of priesthood; married clergy, female clergy</i></p> <p><i>No women priests.</i></p> |

TOPIC 12: Communication

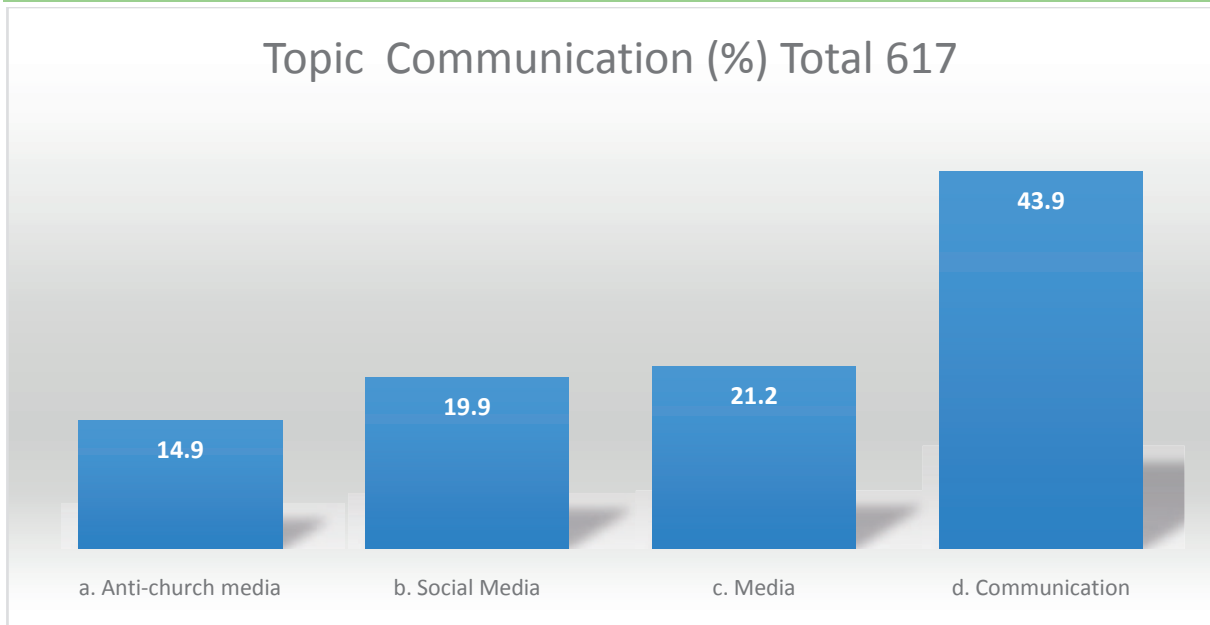


FIGURE 16: TOPIC: COMMUNICATION

| Topic 12: Communication | Key Areas | Quotes |
|-----------------------------|---|--|
| a. Anti-Church Media | <p>There is a lot of negativity in the media towards the church.</p> <p>The Church needs to stand up to the anti-Church movement.</p> | <p><i>"The media has a very negative attitude towards religion, in particular, the Catholic Church. This attitude needs to be challenged by the laity and the clergy at all levels."</i></p> <p><i>"A lot of pressure in society to reject the church and what it stands for."</i></p> <p><i>"We must ignore the disgraceful agenda of the media, which seems hell bent, to destroy all the church stands for."</i></p> <p><i>"There is a growing sense of a non-Christian society being promoted by the media and this has a great influence on the young."</i></p> <p><i>"This attitude needs to be challenged by the laity and the clergy at all levels. "</i></p> <p><i>"Contest it – the Church is doing tremendous work. Talk about it – get it in the papers. Advertise. "</i></p> <p><i>"Need to address the national media – challenge coverage."</i></p> |

| Topic 12: Communication | Key Areas | Quotes |
|----------------------------|---|---|
| b. Social Media | It's important to use social media to get the message out to the young people. | <p><i>"Use social media to reach young people."</i></p> <p><i>"Use modern methods of communication to relate to younger generation."</i></p> <p><i>"Facebook page for the parish – especially to include young people in modern communities."</i></p> |
| c. Media | <p>Use apps, website and social media to promote the message of the Church.</p> <p>There is a need for a Christian radio and television stations.</p> <p>Live streaming of mass, ceremonies and events.</p> | <p><i>"Use social media to promote Church message and views."</i></p> <p><i>"Good apps for Catholics."</i></p> <p><i>"TV channels like EWTN encourages my involvement in my local faith community."</i></p> <p><i>"Radio coverage of masses on local radio could become more widespread and frequent."</i></p> |
| d. Communication | <p>The Church needs to be more up-to-date.</p> <p>There is a need to make positive use of Instagram, Facebook and Snapchat.</p> | <p><i>"Keep the church thinking up to date."</i></p> <p><i>"The Catholic Church needs to update its views and actions."</i></p> <p><i>"Appealing to young people through social media and forums through which they relate."</i></p> <p><i>"Different social media have different age profiles. We need to know who we are targeting and how we will reach them."</i></p> |

TOPIC 13: Decline of Faith

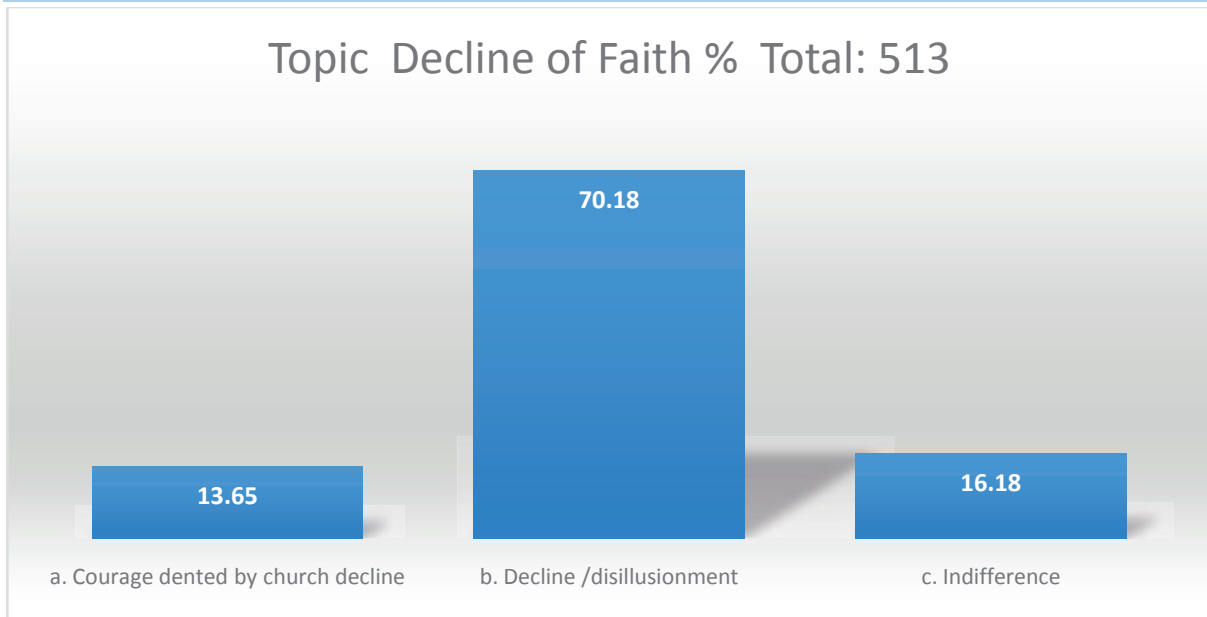


FIGURE 17: TOPIC: DECLINE OF FAITH

| TOPIC 13: Decline of Faith | Key Areas Identified | Quotes |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|---|
| a. Courage dented by church decline | Courage is needed | <p><i>It is up to all Catholics to make an effort to speak up for our religion with people who seem to continue to criticize and knock the church.</i></p> <p><i>The Catholic Church is not the most popular "club" in town. There is a major "anti-church" thinking in the media etc. It takes more courage to say I am part of the church than to agree with those who criticise.</i></p> <p><i>At the current time it takes bravery to say you're part of the Catholic church. Over the last few decades, the lack of inclusiveness and secrecy at higher levels of the 'organisation' have made it increasingly difficult to believe the message of Jesus in the words of the church.</i></p> <p><i>It is difficult because of dropping attendances, general public apathy, it is not cool to be a practicing catholic (which annoys me).</i></p> |

| TOPIC 13: Decline of Faith | Key Areas Identified | Quotes |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| | The ageing church | <p><i>Difficult to be involved due to ageing population.</i></p> <p><i>Low numbers at Mass - old people at Mass.</i></p> <p><i>The fact that few young people are involved or going to Mass makes it difficult.</i></p> |
| | Families are not involved | <p><i>Sometimes it can be frustrating when you see so few at Mass especially when you see family members not being involved.</i></p> <p><i>Swimming against the tide (as perceived by me) - family members who are not practising now or even hostile to the church for a variety of reasons. Not knowing who else is really interested in their faith.</i></p> <p><i>Even in my own family there is very little evidence of the faith surviving especially sport, TV, and training are competing with the Church.</i></p> |
| | The different generations | <p><i>No one my age believes in God.</i></p> <p><i>Young adults are now university educated many doing physics and just do not want to believe in the existence of anything other than what is now living.</i></p> <p><i>Difficult as so few of my friends going to church.</i></p> |
| b. Decline/ Disillusionments | Decline leading to disillusionment | <p><i>A growing number live a life removed from faith. The objective is to try to form a vibrant faith community.</i></p> <p><i>Sometimes I feel we are sliding in the other direction.</i></p> <p><i>The Mass goers are getting fewer, the Churches older and many in need of Major repair, with fewer people to finance the costs, This will not last.</i></p> <p><i>The parish is stagnating and whatever faith is left is withered and dying off.</i></p> <p><i>Acknowledge the failure of the Church institutions and return to the core principles of faith and how to live a good life.</i></p> |

| TOPIC 13: Decline of Faith | Key Areas Identified | Quotes |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| | Fear for the future | <p><i>Fear for the future - the Church has been too slow to respond to what is happening.</i></p> <p><i>Feeling of being left behind with no parish priest being reappointed.</i></p> |
| c. Indifference | Apathy towards faith and religion | <p><i>Nothing encourages me because I don't get involved in anything to do with religion.</i></p> <p><i>Nothing to encourage me to be involved.</i></p> <p><i>The apathy of my family, particularly, my children who no longer attend Mass.</i></p> <p><i>I don't think church/faith applies to modern day life.</i></p> |

TOPIC 14: Church Scandals

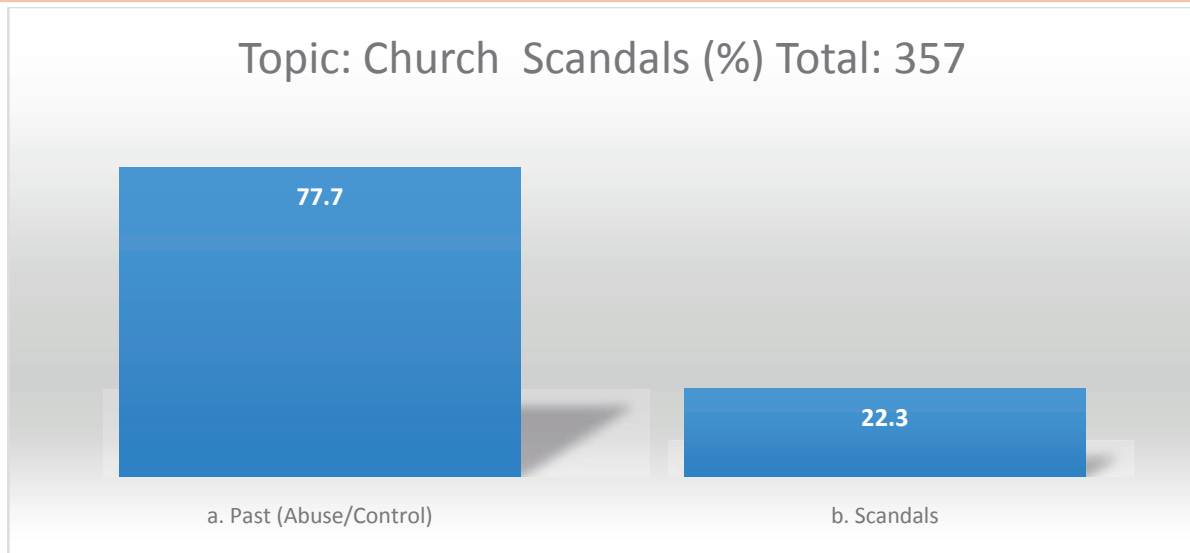


FIGURE 18: TOPIC: CHURCH SCANDALS

| TOPIC 14: Church Scandals | Key Areas Identified | Quotes |
|------------------------------|--|--|
| a. Past (Abuse/Control) | There is a need to acknowledge past abuse and cover up. | <i>I would like the church to acknowledge past wrongs and cover ups. Be open and honest and remember church members are not foolish and can see through this. Priests need to acknowledge the mistakes of the past openly and try to get people back to the church's side. Church in Ireland and all over the world never dealt fully and prayerfully with clerical sex abuse issue.</i> |
| | Abuse was wider than sexual abuse of children. | <i>A difficulty is the Church's treatment of single mums and babies in the past. The way pregnant mothers were treated and babies buried. The Magdalene laundries because trust was broken.</i> |
| | Abuse has/does cause difficulty for people to stay involved in the church. | <i>Difficult to be involved due to failure of the Church authorities to respond adequately. Some of what has happened in the Church in the past prevents me from being involved. The history of the church makes it difficult to be involved.</i> |

| TOPIC 14: Church Scandals | Key Areas Identified | Quotes |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| b. Scandals | Faith of people has been diminished. | <p><i>The scandals took away my faith. A sense of ongoing cover up/protecting/resisting redress, all the above make it difficult to be a person of faith.</i></p> <p><i>It is not easy to defend your faith with the clerical abuse scandals and cover up.</i></p> |
| | Scandals have not been handled well. | <p><i>What makes it difficult is the cover up of sex scandals especially child abuse.</i></p> <p><i>On the issues of sexual abuse full disclosures should be made and apologies given.</i></p> <p><i>Not satisfied with how child abuse was handled.</i></p> |
| | Call to be a more humble church. | <p><i>Want genuine sorrow for what went on in the past.</i></p> <p><i>The conduct of many in power, denial, betrayal, hypocrisy.</i></p> <p><i>The church did not come out strongly enough with its apology.</i></p> <p><i>We should all be able to recognise our failings.</i></p> |

- "Church must be all inclusive and non-judgemental, people are now educated and want to know the reason and meaning". "We need child-friendly churches to support our faith".
- "Each should be treated with respect, whether one agrees with them or not. Sometimes experienced people at the microphone dominate a meeting and prevent the more reserved people from expressing a valuable opinion."
- "Do this in memory" Masses a good idea but some parents don't bother to bring their children once they have received the sacrament".
- "I am a little worried the parents leave religion to the schools.. but as the dept of ed. seems to be putting an end to all of that, would it be possible to have either classes, clubs, groups, etc to help parents with explaining and discussing faith/religion with children???" "Parish preparation for sacraments not schools".
- "I welcome this initiative and fully support it. It is a really welcome event and it is heartening to realize that the diocese is willing to listen to the opinion of ordinary people". "Thanks to the dpc for providing this opportunity to listen to each other and to have a part in the future planning for the diocese"
- "Our priest does not talk to us, we do not know what is going on, we had a newsletter in the past but not anymore, we know nothing now, or maybe he finds it hard to talk"
- "Stop church gate collections" "Women do most organising and background work and are very badly represented". "More faith based supports needed". "More inclusivity of people's choices e.g. being gay/divorced etc". "Remove the money factor". "Disabled parking required". "Heat the church". "Heavy church doors".
- "The Church globally and locally has to understand and implement an ecological view going forward. This encompasses the individual, family, community and governing organisations and power sharing. The isolated individual is a symbol of modern society and the Church can reignite a connectedness through such a model"
- "The Church in Ireland is at a crossroads, what we do now will have a bearing on the future"
- "Unfortunately, the vast bulk of responses to this survey will come from church goers. Those who have left the church will choose not to be heard". "Have a separate questionnaire for young people only".
- "Amalgamation with other Parishes in Church activities where there is a small population".

- “Everyone living in the parish should get a Listening Questionnaire - its non-participants and non-Mass goers that need to be listening to”. “People not willing to get involved when asked”.
- “In a small rural parish , we find it difficult to continue with a choir of adults. I would love if a musical person could travel to each parish a couple of times a year to encourage, teach, help with church choir”.
- “Maybe the parish could do a live stream Mass . Because everyone would like to see a local Mass instead of Mass that they don't know on TV”.
- Gender: Ally, Bi, Cisgender, Gay, Lesbian, Pan.
- “Not all of those who have ceased formal practice of religion have lost the faith. Is faith more important than the organisational clergy?” “Having mass less often may give it more meaning”.
- “People are concerned with what is going on inside themselves. We turn to psychiatrists and alcohol etc. Tell us how to reach Christ's present within. Society is affected by what is going on inside each of us. Help us to understand and know ourselves. Meditation work might help”.
- “Teachers are doing their best in schools. It is a packed curriculum. Parents come on board for sacraments because they are invited to be involved. They have faith and want to nurture their children - they need relevant direction and opportunities to engage with the church in a meaningful and supportive way. Mass is not the answer. If you include them and ask them they will come back also. I am a teacher and mother of 4 young children. I believe in the essential, innate goodness in everyone. Open the doors, provide the opportunities and this community will save itself. Thank you for the opportunity to be heard”.
- “The Church should not be afraid to fall apart. I believe there is a very capable safety net to pick up the precious remnant that will fuel the future.”
- “What about an introduction to the Cosmic Story which marries science and religion and evokes wonder?”

The story of the Cashel & Emly Listening Process 2017-18

Beginning with the Pilot Listening Process.

‘Prepare the way of the Lord’, the title of the Pastoral Letter written by Archbishop Kieran calling us *“to examine the present reality of our church and to chart out a path for the future”* initiated our Listening Process in September 2017. We began in October/November 2017 with 5 parishes, namely, Tipperary Town, Ballinahinch-Killoscully, Templetuohy-Moyne, Murroe-Boher and Moycarkey-Borris-Littleton as our Pilot Listening Process. The purpose of the pilot was firstly, to listen to the people and priests of those parishes and secondly, with a view to assessing the effectiveness of the Pilot Listening Questions as well as the methodology being used. Our Diocesan Pastoral Council (DPC) which had been initiated by Archbishop Kieran in June 2015, had through its Listening Committee designed the Listening Process Questionnaire (see below) and proposed four (4) methods of Listening, namely; a Gathering in each parish, focus groups, the use of the Questionnaire as a survey and an Online Questionnaire on the diocesan website. This strategy emerged from joint meetings with the Council of Priests (CoP), consultation with all the diocesan clergy and advice from pastoral planning personnel in the dioceses of Limerick, Killaloe and Kerry.

The five pilot parishes were selected to reflect the diversity and geographic spread of parishes in Cashel & Emly. After a preparatory meeting with the leadership group in each of the pilot parishes, facilitated by DPC members and preaching at weekend Masses, a Listening Gathering was held in accord with the following format;

- Opening prayer
- Introduction to the Listening Process
- Time for individual parishioners to complete the Listening Questionnaire
- Facilitated group (6) discussion
- Feedback to the larger group to indicate the main themes discussed
- Time to add further detail to individual questionnaires
- Thanks, Tea/coffee & light refreshments.

Continuing with the Listening Process

Upon review of the Pilot Listening Process by the DPC it was agreed that the Listening Questionnaire and methodology used had been effective with some changes made to simplify the questions, i.e. to use the phrase ‘faith community’ rather than ‘church’ (see Listening Process Questionnaire below) and an update on the layout of the questionnaire to include the option of including those interested on a detachable section (to comply with the ethics of data collection). A report for each of the five (5) pilot parishes was prepared as part of the review of the pilot and delivered to their leadership groups during Spring 2018.

The strategy for the Listening Process with the remaining 41 parishes was to hold six (6) Deanery Gatherings to prepare parishes for their own Listening Gathering with the following aims in mind;

- 1 Introduction to the Listening Process with details of the review of the Pilot,
- 2 Training in facilitation of groups and
- 3 Time for each parish to prepare for their Listening Gathering by way of publicity which included preaching at weekend Masses and the preparation of a venue.

It was followed by Listening Gatherings in the remaining 41 parishes throughout the Spring/early Summer and Autumn of 2018 using the format as outlined above. This task was undertaken by the members of the DPC with the help of volunteer facilitators from within parishes as well as those who travelled to their neighbouring parishes and beyond. In all, 60 facilitators were involved throughout the diocese to ensure that the format of each Parish Gathering was effective, in particular, the small

group discussions. The Listening Questionnaire was made available online on our Diocesan website until December 31st 2018, publicised throughout the diocese, in particular, with primary school, post primary school staffs and carers of those with disability. Also, focus groups were held with the following groups; Returned Missionaries, Religious, Travelling Community and the Polish Community.

Listening to Priests.

During our preparations for the Listening Process, in particular, at our Diocesan Gathering on May 23rd 2017, it was made clear that as well as listening to the people, we needed to listen to the priests of our diocese. Dr John A. Weafer, of Weafer Associates Research & Consultancy Ltd was commissioned to prepare a questionnaire for priests and he made himself available to priests during the Spring of 2018. The findings of this research have been provided to priests and to the DPC for ongoing discussion and integration into this Diocesan Listening Process Report.

Analysis of the Listening Process Data.

During the Summer of 2018 the DPC prepared for the analysis of the data with training provided to 18 volunteer analysts by Limerick Diocese. The training consisted of taking a sample of questionnaires submitted so as to identify the main headings and sub-headings emerging as outlined in the subsequent pages of this report. Each of the 18 analysts then used these heading/sub-headings to categorise the data from each Listening Questionnaire and extract quotations to support the use of those headings/sub-headings. This work took place for the remainder of 2018 and up to January 31st 2019.

Reporting on the Listening Process and Next Steps.

The DPC then proceeded with the final stage of analysis of the Listening Process data now in the form of the number of headings/sub-headings with the relevant quotations from parishioners. The key messages that emerged from each heading/sub-heading were extracted with actual quotations to support them in preparation for a Diocesan Report on the Listening Process. Upon discussions of the DPC, the Council of Priests (CoP) and a joint meeting of both bodies it was agreed that a Diocesan Listening Report with detail on the next steps be made to the six Deanery Gatherings consisting of;

- 1 priests,
- 2 parish pastoral leadership groups,
- 3 those who have submitted their name for further contact at the Parish Listening Gatherings and
- 4 Archbishop Kieran.

The Volunteer effort involved.

The story of the Cashel & Emly Listening Process 2017-18 could only have happened with 'mighty' generosity on the part of DPC members (26), volunteer facilitators (60), analysts (18) and preachers (10) so as to bring the Listening Process to the report stage. Since Sept 2017, their dedication can be appreciated in terms of DPC meetings, accounting for 56 up to 192 hours each, facilitators being available for an average of 13 hours with some for, in excess of 200 hours, analysts completing on average 59 hours each, the preaching preparation hours of the DPC personnel and countless hours of administration. In thanksgiving for all who have been involved to date and with great hope for engagement by more people throughout our archdiocese in our next steps, we pray with St. Paul, *"Yes, everything is for your sake, so that grace, as it extends to more and more people, may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God."* (2 Corinthians 4:15-16)



Archdiocese of Cashel & Emly

Listening Process

You are invited as a member of the Church in Cashel & Emly to participate in a process of listening, reflecting and planning for the future of the Church in the Archdiocese. The people and priests of each of our parishes are engaged with this listening process. All are welcome to contribute to this process including those, who for various reasons, have left our church communities.

The Principles informing the listening process are:

1. The Gospel and its promotion will be at the core of what informs the listening process.
2. There is an underlying understanding that this process is part of increasing lay involvement in and decisions about the future of the church.
3. That the listening is for all Catholics who may or may not be practicing.
4. It is underpinned by the values of respect for the people and where they are at in the practice of faith and with humility acknowledging the past wrongs of the church.
5. All participants are asked to ensure that any personal details, that may be revealed by other participants, are kept within the process.

Upon completion of the Listening Process the information gathered will be analysed and communicated to each parish. Then, we will use all the data collected to work together as a diocese in laying out a pastoral plan for the coming years.

Please complete the questions fully – with as much information as you are comfortable. We have left a space at the bottom for any further comments that you might wish to make.

If you wish to become involved in the Listening Process **please detach the box below and enter your details;**

.....

| Full Name | Parish | Mobile Phone No. | Email Address (in BLOCK CAPITALS) | Office Use |
|-----------|--------|------------------|-----------------------------------|------------|
| | | | | |

Participating in church.

1. How relevant is the church in your life today? *Please circle the number of your choice*

| | | | | |
|---------------|----------|-----------|-------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Very Relevant | Relevant | Undecided | Somewhat Relevant | Not at all Relevant |

2 a. What encourages you to be involved in your local faith community?

b. What makes it difficult for you to be involved in your local faith community?

3. How can you be supported in your faith?

4. How can we ensure that the faith will be alive in our Parish into the future?

5. If there are any other comments /suggestions / feedback which you would like to add, please write these here;

Background Information (not obligatory)

Gender _____

What age group are you in?

| Under 18 | 19-25 | 26-35 | 36-45 | 46-55 | 56-65 | 66-75 | 75+ |
|----------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
| | | | | | | | |

Thank you for participating in this Listening Process which is taking place in each parish of the Archdiocese of Cashel & Emly. We appreciate your sharing of your views and opinions in this process of listening, reflecting and planning for the future of our Church. We are grateful for the time you have given to complete this form and assure you that the information gathered from the process will be put to good use in the Parish and the Archdiocese.

Diocesan Pastoral Planning & Development.

Email: pastoral.office@cashel-emly.ie





The forty six parishes of Cashel & Emly