

# 2024 Adelaide Diocesan Assembly

## Raw Data of Feedback from Spiritual Conversations

### Discernment Round 1 - "How can we be a more Synodal Church on Mission"

#### Key Points:

- Small groups driven by leaders inspired to drive change and lead others to a relationship with Jesus, and with each other. Vibrant faith is contagious.
  - We all carry the mission of the church, to be welcoming, to help people belong, being authentic and have opportunities to participate at whatever level is right for the individual at that time, we welcome Catholics "returning home" without judgement.
  - Openness to change – read the signs of the times, push past obstacles to change. Be strategic and flexible in the ways we make Christ visible.
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- Celebrating, Acknowledging, Naming what we do better
  - What's the why? The mission has a Church rather than the Church has a mission – be more like a movement
    - How does mission look now for the people we are reaching to?
    - Bridging the gap across worshipping communities and schools and other groups to share and identify opportunities for 'outreach' opportunities
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- Listening and connecting
    - Being present with others
    - Walking with them allowing us to walk with them
  - Mission
    - Building mission across our communities
    - Constant in a state of mission
  - Looking beyond what we have looked like before – being open to the new, being creative – based upon what we learn from being with others. Being vulnerable
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#### Parish on Mission

- On Fire
- Bridge between Parish/School and across the week
- Recognising people are hurting – awareness
- Using this process to help us be aware of those others, our mission
- Are we allowing resources? We know what we have to do – is it the same people trying to do it all?
- Faith formation to support mission
- New faces – bridging between parish and school – especially families
- Voice – who's needs are we meeting?
- Listening to the needs and slowing down to know what the needs are
- How do we let others know what we do?
- The mission has a church rather than the church has a mission

- Jesus Church
  - More like a movement
  - People connecting with movement
    - What the mission is – questions – what's on offer? Recruiting who?
    - Celebrating what we have, acknowledging
    - Business – slowing down
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- A Parish on Mission looks like a community that has the Gospel at its heart and takes the word of God out to the greater community
  - A Parish on Mission has a sense of the dignity of all and is inclusive; it teams into the messiness of that and speaks in a language understood by all
  - A parish on Mission is life giving; it brings fulfillment to the lives of those within the community and has an impact on the broader community

### Mission/Outreach

- More discernment and understanding of what a parish is/means
    - What we can learn from this journey and connect all the elements of the parish – school, church, hospital community – “Being Church Together” a good reference
  - Dialogue & Relationship and listening – shared responsibility we are not walking alone
  - Community – listening – outreach – welcoming people to Church
  - Connecting – our Schools and developing the dialogue between schools, families and the Church
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- A Synodal Church on Mission would act/look/sound like the body of Christ where all voices are equal, where we listen and are responsible for each other. Less institutional more like a movement. You can't be what you can't see.
  - A Synodal Church is called to hear cry of the poor, marginalised and suffering violence and to let this shape our understanding and action.
  - Young people can teach us and challenge us and we can mentor and support them to continue to be agents of change and compassion and importantly to allow young people to shape our Church through their leadership
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- Spread our tent – go out and welcome in! Be courageous and challenged – seek feedback
  - Priests and people need to support work together because they need each other (nourish each other). The Church's mission needs to be shared by all, so that it can be fruitful.
  - Schools/Colleges & Parishes need to truly work together and support each other. Parish is not just the worshipping community – We all need to feel that we belong and that our diversity is welcomed joyfully.
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- Energetic, happy, directed, inclusive, non-Judgemental Parishes. Inclusive room for everyone, connect their story to our story, feel seen, dialogue, youth friendly communication, permission to be authentic self, whatever that looks like.
  - Concrete practical vibrant participation – all groups have a voice, working groups, opportunities to all voices, action on what shared, authentic for that community, invitation to all, with incoming confidence for each, don't leave to priest
  - Limitations of protocols, traditions, rules that stifles the mission – need to take risks, freedom to use gifts, permission to try new things, get stopped at bureaucracy level

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- Share resources e.g. RCIA with neighbouring parishes
    - Music, youth group, gardeners, ideas, children's liturgy, finances
    - Homilies, Community Directed
  - Define Archdiocese version of What is Mission? What is Synodality?  
(Co-constructed)  
Are we authentically open to change and movement forward. True listening
  - Focus on preparation to Dialogue. Especially as parishes are merging and Mass Centres are varied. Make it authentic.
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### Synodal Church – look and feel

- Everyone within working together community/service church same pages
- PPC important – meeting regularly
- Working on same mission
- Mission reviewed
- To deliver
- Take it back to the communities  
e.g. sacramental program – church =/parish
- Same message, same team
- Everyone/diversity/age culture/alive and living, breathing  
e.g. youth, elderly different people bringing own talents, gifts -> community
- Feels – vibrant, alive, everyone is welcome, screaming kids, different needs – you are welcome
- Everyone has a voice being heard e.g. notice boards
- Spirit moves
- Unique differences
- Not just coming together but encourage space where one is respected and not feel threatened, practice in own way
- No fear – show differences – not always to the same model of every person
- Synodal – being all together sharing the same, reaching out in faith
- Mission – Why?
  - To save more souls
  - Goes back to our faith – reach out to others – hospitals community
- Dialogue then prioritise how we 'action it'
- PPC – resources from gathering – how to bring it back – use that knowledge to pursue mission
- It starts with Baptism
- Confirmation
- How are we engaging parents, continuing, ways of engaging parents
- Great success of Catholic Church is through schools – traditions, faith, values
- Children surrounded
- Catholic Schools
- Why are we baptised but not practicing catholic faith
- Gift – deep religious act of faith
- Catholic Schools – business – need that to reciprocal – church goes to school – church coming to schools

- Baptism is the centre piece of the Catholic faith. Primary sacrament, it shapes everything, how we construct the parish
- Synodal
- Challenges
  - Disability
  - Reality of it
  - Catholic Parish
  - PPC – bring it back
  - Exploring the theology and doctrines of baptism, go back to the faith
- Synodality
  - It doesn't work – each section has its own goal to achieve
  - Mission flows from a need  
e.g. disability – specific – church build but not accessible in reality its hard
  - School – own freedom
  - Church tries to be inclusive but the reality is how it is possible
  - Synodal = group gathered, everywhere, diverse groups.  
Parish level = different countries/culture/language barrier  
Reality = challenging to get people to be active in the parish = struggle to get the youth active
- Synodal
  - To look at identification of Catholic Church, Catholic Schools, identifying the Church
    - No competition of parishes, some of our little parishes ought to be in a same team rather than competing with each other
  - Baptism is the central sacrament not just an ordination
  - All comes with relationship with Jesus, carers for the world and environment, outreach to the natural world, ecological appreciation
  - Keep understanding of Jesus > foundation the tradition
- What struck you
  - Baptism
    - gives the same levelling
    - locally but beyond the parish
  - My Parish (undo the mentality of My Parish)
    - Shortage of priests
    - Or “this is my Parish Priest”
  - We are a synodal Church
    - Stems from Baptism regardless of which sector you are from, we are the church
  - Jesus
    - Step away and look at the bigger picture, reimagine what it could be
    - Can we connect with the people, inspire them to com with us and not to impose on them our beliefs
  - Baptism

- Census # of people attending church, they identify in Census as Catholics but not share the same faith
  - Baptism – facing challenges
  - Parish is without borders, Parish centres of Communion  
“Parish becomes availability of Priest” which shouldn’t be
  - Baptism and the challenges of the reality of being synodal faces the challenges – this out ideal but how do we make it inclusive

### What does a Synodal Church on Mission look and feel like?

- Christ centred dialogue is essential
  - Teaching of Gospels is needed
  - Acceptance
    - Invitation to a conversation about Jesus is to be promoted
  - Identify formation through contextualisation of faith and guided self discovery....is what this looks like
  - Active presence/involvement (through courses like Alpha)... is what this looks like
  - We need ACTION – 5 year or 10 year plan, at Parish level (PPC to lead). Make time to encourage whole congregation to be the mission, know the mission and articulate it. Measure objectives along the way (Treat strategy like a business team)
  - Education/formation/catechises for people to know their faith and mission of the Church so that people can be raised up as leaders (at all levels). Leaders = missionaries. Formation for non-Catholic teachers and parents.
  - Be a welcoming environment that encourages presence which, together with hospitality and acceptance of where people are at, leads to involvement in church and later in leadership (a sense of mission). This welcoming and connecting of people is for the whole ‘Church’ - those in church and those out of church – shut ins, lapse, unchurched. Culture of acceptance of children’s curiosity, behaviour etc so they feel welcome in church.
  - Our Churches need to be places which emulate deep listening, authentic dialogue, welcome and love
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- A Synodal Church is prayerful and radiates God’s love as guided by the Spirit.
  - Unconditional acceptance of everyone’s gifts, sharing in the stories of others.
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- A Synodal Church on Mission looks and feels messy, vibrant, constantly moving and dialoguing. Courageously listening to the messiness of our reality to inform our deliberate, inclusive and empowering actions, which greet uncharted horizons with humble confidence.
  - We need to think and plan and act beyond just our little patch (e.g. parish) and listen to what the community is saying and what it needs.
  - We need to acknowledge that everyone has a role and needs to be listened to and encouraged to actively contribute their gifts (i.e. not just the leaders – need to include the workers/students). We have a shared mission but it may look different in different places and we need to learn from others – this enables and manifests inclusivity.
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- A Church that is welcoming and inclusive – joyful experience
  - School/Parish working together/relationships
  - Churches need to be places of outreach and formation

### Synodal Church on Mission – Round 1

- Valuing the richness in all people, their dignity, their skills. Acknowledging that everyone has something to give.

- Leadership is rooted in 'Baptism'. We need to encourage and welcome people to take up agency both in and outside of one Parish.
  - Cultural Change at the Church level. The Church intentionally empowering people to act.
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- Church on mission needs to work as a large community and family, be inclusive, respectful, collaborative, consultative and collegial. Parish – school and Diocese/Archdiocese and beyond. Recognising all walks of life, stages of life, cultural background
  - Working together in communion with active two-way listening to hear the voice of all (general population, the unheard/underrepresented) lead by the Holy Spirit without fear of judgement. Being a welcoming and accepting Church is good, but we also need empowerment and support to make change on the smaller local level and this action and making change can be difficult.
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- Main point – All about relationships with God and with others. A Synodal Church is a collection of communities that fosters those relationships and moves forward
  - To know the need we're responding to, being open to the challenge and change
  - Incorporating the Social Justice values and environment in schools to engage students and local communities
  - Celebration – to recognise and appreciate what we're doing and has been working well through sharing. Networking through regional assemblies and other groups to inspire and encourage others.
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- Committed to process of listening/discerning working together (our understanding of Synodality)
  - Alignment of Church & local community. Relationship is important. Church needs to be focussed on catechising families
  - Importance of youth and how we can support them and attract them to the faith

#### Topic: Synodality (Leadership Group)

- Language: contemporary, lay, modern, inclusive and accessible language to all (God language) but also for those who don't relate to our own languages
- Church: Isn't just a building or on Sundays. A community centered church that allows us to participate in people's lives. To create a feeling of known and loved. Active and proactive.
- Formation: To help change our hearts (and minds) = metanoia so we can live these thoughts and words in action. We know action fosters love and hope, creates space to journey together in a spirit of learning and growth.

#### Topic: Structures

- Communion
  - With people we don't see
  - Diverse spirits
  - Different gifts
  - Disciples of Jesus
- Inclusive – how do this more
  - PPC driving change
  - What is Parish – re imaging Parish
  - Deep listening
- Offer an alternative to what the world offers



## Actions Round 1:

- Scaffolding or whole system structures that also allow for diversity and individual ethos of each parish/community/entity.
  - Formation for leaders at all levels – we are all leaders of the mission
  - Small group resources – we develop belonging and faith through journeying alongside others
  - Outreach programs
  - Members see & want to be part of (bridge disconnect)
  - Engage with parents of school
  - Parish faces active in school – listen to ‘different’ voices
  - We are church – not the building – engage with people – outward facing
  - Let the children come
  - Opportunity for faith formation at all ages/stages
  - What is our faith & our mission to secure
  - Active, motivated, focussed, all heading -> direction, all have voice= roots = faith, WWJD
  - Teachers not having religion
  - Mission in “Church” but also in our lives
  - Push back from parents re religion (Parents Q’s)
  - Action! Less talk
  - People need people but numbers decreasing. Not retaining people
  - Enc whole congregation to bring new members via hospitality, meetings, relationship, formation
  - Formation about who we are and what is Jesus’ mission
  - Schools important
  - Treat like a business – goals, strategies, formation
  - Know the mission – mission s/-/vision
  - Know your client base – listen to their needs/stories
  - Core business – make obvious the love of God – love of people
  - Communicate well. What’s happening, invite well and often and build relationships to bring them to community
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- Within the governance system – identifying possibilities for meeting safeguarding, responsibility requirements and also enabling those ready to engage in outreach to be able to do so (some hurdles) “especially our youth”
  - Investigation solutions to blockages that slow or stop outreach
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- Focussing on ways of mission
  - Utilising this process at the local level
  - Developing teams – being open to new forms of teams – formed across parish communities
  - A thorough review of structures and attitudes within the Church e.g. misogyny and the ways these inhibit our ability to be authentically the Body of Christ and positive agents of change in society
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- Recommendations:
    - A group of women are invited to form a think tank to look at how the Diocese can support action against domestic violence
  - Empowerment/permission of the individual context to take risks
  - Devolved power honouring subsidiary into different areas, no don’t have to go to the ‘top’ always
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- How do we minister effectively to schools, hospitals, nursing homes, prisons? Who is involved? Build relationships.



- A year of formation for all leaders of the Church. Listening with love.
  - Shared leadership so all ideas, initiatives, projects are valued and given a chance.
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- Support Priests – change can be difficult or easy
  - Digital footprint – more equal for all parishes
  - Open dialogue not only in this assembly but in the community
  - Diverse role models (champions) so that we can see ourselves in who is the public face of the Church
  - Positive messaging so that the mission is understood to be life giving and accepting rather than restrictive or only judgemental
  - Difference of point of view: rigorous religious education curriculum cited by some; 'dilution' of catholic teachings communicated by others.
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- Do something – ask someone to come to Church with you
- Be a welcoming to church – people welcoming others to church

### Topic: Synodal Church on Mission – Round 1

- Formation suitable/Education so people can take up responsibilities
  - Making the process and formation accessible to different languages, cultures and generations.
  - Create opportunities for gathering and building connections.
  - Going out to meet people where they are
  - Review or evaluate outcome of discussions. Effectiveness of projects
  - Communicating the results.
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- Effective welcoming teams with a certain consistency
  - A team that liaises between 'Parish' and Schools
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- How do we empower the women, minority groups, 'the unheard' in the church? Perhaps existing religious sisters need to have more active roles and be more present in parish communities instead of just being traditionally in a "support role"
  - Local parishes need encouragement to create working groups or teams perhaps to welcome new parishioners/get to know their fellow parishioners, create resources to share what groups, activities are available to be part of to be more involved and become active participant.
  - Invest in multi-modal methods for information sharing (notices, resources). To spread the word and bridge gaps between generations.
  - Perhaps a new framework needs to be created/or existing Church framework better shaped so all can understand roles in the Church, the Vision and how to enact change.
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- Better resource of country areas
- Review of Sacramental system e.g. confirmation at later age teenagers receiving confirmation
- Structural mentoring of youth

### Topic: Synodality (Leadership Group)

- Create space for local formation outside of a Sunday Mass (e.g. unpack mass/gospel language in the classroom)

## Topic: Mission – What does a Parish on Mission look like

- Name tags – breaks down anxiety in meeting new people
  - Leadership & Priest 'knowing people deeply' can link with helping people
  - Not emails and fliers we need conversions and accompanying people
  - Roles – 'one job for one year or mentorship or deputy whose role is to be the chair next time (succession planning)
  - Formation/outlines for small groups e.g. bible study, Messy Church
  - School/Parish relationship & solidarity was another key theme of the group including the need for youth groups for late primary/early High School aged young people and for their adult leaders.
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- Forums to have discussions across parishes/groups
    - Communities to create these opportunities i.e. Beyond formal Diocesan -organised events
    - Declutter PPC agendas so as to focus on mission not business
      - DPC/Pastoral Services team in Archdiocese to train/encourage/support PPCs in this
  - Need to look at Pastoral Theology – Spirituality not dogma – domestic Church. This needs to happen at Diocesan Level: formation.
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- When there are rules, traditions or theological elements which might serve as a barrier to people feeling welcome and included, we properly explain the basis for these and take a pastoral approach – find a way to make it work so we can be welcome and inclusive without entirely abandoning or watering down important elements of our faith and tradition. (there was disagreement as to how 'flexible' we should/can be with the rules; theology vs love/pastoral emphasis). (Strayed slightly from topic – discussion re baptisms and funerals and how people can be put off and excluded by strict rules around these).
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- The Archdiocese needs to rain Priest to give priority to leadership. We feel secondary school is missing out on the presence of a Priest. There is a disconnect.

## 2. Discernment Round 2 – “Themes and Questions”

### Key Points:

#### Topic: Local Action & Responsibility

- Produce opportunities to encounter outside of the mass/experience
  - The importance of invitation (inclusion, who is missing)
  - “If we build it they will come”, but what are we building? It will be different for every community (identify your needs) e.g. covid
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- Open/Active Communication driven by our mission
  - Our actions reflective of our mission
    - Music
    - Inclusion
    - Inclusive language
    - Structure of the mass
    - In everyday life
    - Evolving with the sings of the times
    - Reaching out to the vulnerable
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- Education in understanding our mission of being a synodal church
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- Relationships develop where there is frequent meaningful connection (the next points flow from this one)
  - Transitional points: How are we continuing to engage people in these transitional times e.g. baptism – primary school – sacraments – high school – beyond
  - Church coming to contexts i.e. Schools and having regular conversations.
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- Inclusiveness/welcoming – language and community based (familiar language does not overwhelm or push away), not just action, Synodal.
  - Listening and actively being heard (validated) – feel heard
  - Parish/School relationships (sharing facilities and personnel) – understanding school is Parish and are doing God’s work. School does – Mass Centre Mass Centre – School does.
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- Making space for everyone to journey together in faith. Where we build an inclusive community that worships and grows together.
  - Leadership and formation in various forms to equip us with the tools to carry out our ministry and influence a sense of connections.
  - Identifying Constraints and removing barriers to ensure that the Catholic Church is relevant in today’s society

#### Topic: Pastoral Planning

- The Aging and the role of technology – can’t be the only means of communication – don’t want people to be left out.
- Need to build a community
- “Tap & Go” for collection / still needs cash
- Open communication – we need to know how to contact the relevant agencies. Region 3 how do we contact the groups (need a directory) e.g. (working in conjunction with parish priests – shortage – how to get help.
- Leadership roles – how do we get ourselves involved. What are the resources available to lay people. How do we get them involved – where do they acquire those skills (due to organisational change)

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- Multi-generational family focussed faith formation, in strong collaboration with schools to ensure we don't miss valuable opportunities like celebration preparation of Sacrament
  - Action plans with Archdiocese practical support at setting up Parish Plans with good communication ( one-year goals and five-year goals to ensure accountability)
  - Eucharistic celebrations, joyful, relevant, inclusive and loving and nurturing. Life giving demonstrating a church that is alive. Also greater opportunities for prayer and formation beyond Mass.
  - Continuing ways of being Church (don't lose our values and identity), incorporating new, contemporary and inclusive actions – to encourage others and inspire members to be active and to be the change. Everyone can contribute – don't just think 'do'
  - Promote the 'all' in 'all' in Parish life – everyone has a role – utilize gifts and talents, being Church together joining the variety of ministries and engagement with multicultural communities.
  - Creating Structures for a faith filled community. Focussing on sound financial and administrative structures to help empower all members of the Parish community.
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- Parish Geographical planning not relevant today – reimagine them 60 Parishes – 10 Super Parishes, Brave in looking at the bigger picture
  - Embrace technology – Church online teaching. Lay people taking responsibility due to Priest shortage, "Popular mission" – talk about your faith
  - Elderly move into nursing homes – losing track of people
  - Vinnies leaflet, offer online options, home visits
  - Formation of lay people in leadership. People need to be in the right jobs
  - People need gifts of the spirit
  - People leave the Church through hurts
  - Motivate parishioners. Training for volunteers
  - The process of mergers should be from and Archdiocesan level
  - Encourage cultural gatherings – African Mass Cathedral
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- Outward in our mission (awaiting overarching theme among all participants)
  - Effective witness fulfilling societies need for belonging and meaning
  - Structures that might have to die to grow again
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- To assist children in primary school mature and understand more fully the decisions they make, we should have First Communion in Primary School but move Confirmation to High School. This would also increase involvement with Parish which has already been noted as lacking in many parishes.
  - Formation of laity. Formation for ministry. We have adequate resources. We are told that formation opportunities in the 1970s were extensive
  - Offer to have Seminarians finish their studies in Australia rather than to simply import Priests. Open up the door to women Priests. Austral has had its access to Missionaries.
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### Topic: Collaborative Leadership and Relationships

- How do we collaborate and be co-responsible for the issues in our society? Read the signs of the time, what are we doing about it? Violence against women, what are we doing? How are we showing leadership?
- Give people autonomy to make decisions
- Empowered by the Holy Spirit, diversify leadership structures in the Church e.g. who give the sermon at Mass sometimes. Focus group on hot topics in society – women, violence, mental health

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- The concept of Synodality is a paradigm shift – how do we communicate this, structure it, form people for it - make it a reality. Consultations that have already taken place are feeding this – but communication needs to be really good to Everyone.
  - Good structures only come from good foundation – this calls for extensive formation at all levels.
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- Culture: A commitment to a culture of understanding. We are all baptised and called to leadership through our universal baptism (based on the gospels and Jesus) Canon law interpreted by the nature/culture of the gospel
  - Consistency: in leadership structures and appointment of leadership. This involves review, feedback, learning and mentoring.
  - Strengths; utilise the strengths and gifts of all ages and experiences. From greeting people to church branding to social media. Not defined by canon law! Gospel!
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- Visibility – bring our authentic selves – the best we can be – sharing with others
  - Welcoming – engaging – magnetic – non-judgemental – accepting differences
  - Understanding our common Baptism – as call to leadership – and our collaboration together in community
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#### Topic: Mission

- Centre on Mission, not on Mass – change the mindset, not saying Mass is not important, the interactions people have are relevant, connect to issues that matter
  - Individually and corporately connect with Mission – got to have good news to spread, makes sense to the individual, something to connect for everyone.
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- Welcoming and inclusive, everyone from different walks of life feels comfortable, culture, disability, divorced
  - Mission comes from our own baptism and our own relationship with God
  - Listening to the needs of the community and moving with the times, change in policy
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#### Topic: Mission & Outreach

- Prioritise outward looking rather than a focus on drawing people in
  - Provide a safe neutral space to gather that is not a church where people may be fearful of an agenda and to come with the idea of checking in with love and no other motive
  - We need to think about the 'why' and focus not just those who identify as Catholic but rather look first for those in need.
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- Authenticity – the Synodal Church is about unity and diversity, but some experiences of Church are not respectful and inclusive
  - Hierarchical and patriarchal Church
    - Synodality challenges this: difference should be celebrated; regional Church needs to respond to our culture
  - Networks of support – how do we find each other and hold each other up in the midst of challenging times.
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- Strategic goals
    - short term – need focus & good leadership
    - medium
    - long term
    - What is the relevance of the church to the marginalised?
    - Relationship – communication – language and relevance
  - Building bridges between Parishes – together we can achieve great things
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- Breaking down the silos between parishes and drawing on positive skills and the things that work – mission
  - Bringing God to the people and people to God
    - Encouraging them to go out to the world
    - Going out to the marginalised
    - Breaking (the exclusivity of language)
      - If it is success, then to have our Churches filled or is this a trap?
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- Baptism is the centre piece of the Catholic faith. It should be the central sacrament, aside from the ordination. It all comes down to our relationship with Jesus. If we have a deep understanding of why we are baptised as Catholics, we have a deep understanding of our faith and know Jesus and the tradition of the Catholic faith – and then it seems from these we can build the spiritual foundations of our church and how we build our Catholic Communities beyond the Parish but also in schools, hospitals and others and caring for our world – environment.
  - A synodal Church on mission, alive and breathing the spirit. Identification of Catholic Church and Schools
    - Gathering of people from different cultures, ages, countries, not competition of parishes, changing the concept of 'this is my parish', diverse groups, being alive and together
    - Sharing the same faith but still respecting differences and respect of each other's way of an individual way of practicing faith and that voices are heard

#### Topic: Parish on Mission

- Community working together on same mission, teach Jesus' mission
- Everyone in agreement
- Bringing church out into community and bringing people in
- Follow Jesus' ways and go out to the community, to those who are disenfranchised (refugees, mental health, etc)
- Thinking about the 'why'
- We must be strong in faith before we can go out
- Looks active -> mass at the centre, social activity
- Tap into what exists
- Outreach, going out, living where we feel comfortable
- To be moved and evangelized
- Mission – is not how we get people but how can we get them to more about Jesus

#### Topic: Structures

- Formation in how to be 'Synodal'
    - Need to get this teaching to the grass roots level
  - Good will vs Blockers
    - People want to be Synodal but feel that structures (sometimes the Parish Priest) can block us from fully doing this.
  - Need to continue bringing people together -> connection and exchanges
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- Sense of inclusion and welcome
    - Outreach
    - Clear Values
  - Authentic listening – context is always important
    - Accept difference of opinion and tension
  - Some frustration – our church should be a place without fear even if I am different

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- Establishment of Synodal culture. Overarching atmosphere of inclusivity, respect & listening. Modelling by committees
  - Structures not dependent upon the personality of the priest
  - Normalise sound governance procedures. Diverse representation, accountability, terms of appointment, self-evaluation, succession planning.
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- PPC -essential to ensuring mission > maintenance
    - Membership/leadership to be transparent
    - How ? – struggle to get members
    - Develop a 'Parish Profile' – get to know the neighbourhood
  - Formation for Parish Priests re PPC
    - Formation for PPCs
    - Formation for Parishioners
  - Good communication around 'Gospel in this place'
    - Publicised, reinforced
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- Important changes needed to foster Synodal Parishes
  - Making Church relevant to parishioners (which can be dynamic & flexible as the parish population changes)
    - Language
    - Cultural elements
    - Representation in leaders and role models
  - Invest in reaching out to the wider community to welcome/draw people to the church but also tap into the existing talents and skills of parishioners (social workers, leaders in work outside of Church). Provides purpose
  - Individual attitudes need to change before we can make larger change or change in others. Support one another and support our Clergy to support us.
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- Roles and Responsibilities
    - Youth development – attract youth in general, passing the torch
    - Women's participation
    - Families' involvement
  - Ministries, Parish-School
    - Alignment effective between school and Parish (better communication)
  - Governance, Policies Regulations
    - Diocesan coverage
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### Topic: Resources

- Understanding more about Diocesan Resources available to Parishes to help Parishes with local Pastoral Planning
- We are all diverse in our needs. Understanding needs in Parishes at many different levels and to look at ways of clustering support as areas are identified
- Supporting Clergy and Parishes to develop models of increased delegation and empowering in a range of duties and roles that will support and sustain Pastoral Planning – The parish Priest/Clergy can't do it all as this can lead to a form of micromanagement.

Topic: What does collaborative co-responsibility between ordained and non-ordained look like in a Synodal Parish on Mission?

- Building strong relationships between people (ordained and non-ordained) so that they understand each other's roles and can share aspects of those roles as necessary (and as far as possible)

- Broadening representation on Pastoral Councils to ensure schools and all other Parish ministries and activities are represented so that all can be heard and act in concert and consistently with regular dialogue between each other.
- Leaders to understand and recognise when people with specific skills are needed to promote collaboration, seek support from the Archdiocese and using creative ways to share life experiences to relate to the congregation

**Topic: Local Action**

- Responsibility, connection, action e.g. kindness, social justice, liturgical development 'Being Church Together', Multi-cultural activities, presence in schools of priests/religious
- Problem of non-involvement at Church, go out to it/them – schools contain the future. Challenge of communicating to families – encouraging prayer life – “Domestic Church”
- Youth/middle group – connecting with occasional Catholics  
Stewardship – affordability  
Using social media to good ends



## Actions Round 2:

### Topic: Local Action & Responsibility

- Learn the demographics (age/culture/stage of life) of your parish (who is missing) – identifying needs
- Review of the structure of the mass/liturgical celebrations
- Liturgical music (restrictions in what can be used)
- What are the earworm
- Evangelli Gaudium – changing times, adapting tradition for today
- Great if we could have a uniform summary that could be shared with parishes in addition to personal experience (Sarah & Peter)
- Putting money where value is. If we think it's important, we need to invest in it
- Newsletter with important information on a local level
- Paid roles – “context collectors”
- Setting up structures within Mass Centres and Schools for deep listening to occur and validation of points of view and perspectives ( no judgements)
- We understand that this will look different at the local level, however we feel we need to form a leadership that is relevant, represents all the communities and individuals of that parish to be able to lead at a grass root level.

### Topic: Pastoral Planning

- Central information (database)
- Clear directions from the top – Archdiocese
- Note: Parishes all face the same problems – yet we are running like ‘silos’ in solving our main problems. Pull resources together so no duplication.
- Have specific Action plans and processes that everyone can understand. Clarity of mission and purpose at the local level.
- Be always active in our welcoming and in our invitation to do God's work – find ways that suit your community. Be creative and inclusive – in particular new families and youth.
- To continually ask the question – ‘What are we doing here’ – Diocesan and local level.
- Archdiocesan direction around new larger parishes/mergers
- Being brave to see opportunities in creating new gathering spaces
- More training for volunteers
- Putting the right people in the right roles
- We need better support/integration education for priests new to the country
- PPC need to have more authority where the priest is a member of the Parish team
- Bigger/newer parishes should be planned for a positive reason, not just closing parishes due to the lack of people/priests
- Encourage volunteers – see the church as our own homes
- Training for those who welcome
- Formation/support
- Continued formation to enable us to witness more effectively
- Investigate the transference of Confirmation to Secondary School, Remove barriers to this occurring and to strengthen the links between Parish and High Schools

## Topic: Collaborative Leadership and Relationships

- A statement of invitation and inclusion (An A4 Statement)
  - Interpreting canon law in the light of the gospel to drive a more loving culture. Not to interpret the gospel in light of canon law.
- 

## Topic: Mission

- Formation programs that all can interact with to connect to mission (discovery of gifts)
  - Include everyone in practical and achievable expressions of faith (Centacare) – connect to all in Parish, Catholic and non
  - Hear stories on a Sunday about people on Mission – small, true mission stories
  - Include more in a big conversation, not 'exclusive' conversations
  - Groups who can work with Parishes to provide mission opportunities
  - Make Parishes the centre of 'problem solving' for people
    - See us as interconnected in the way we ? people, Centacare, Vinnies, Schools, Churches
- 
- Review to change in Canon Law to move in line with current times

## Topic: Parish on Mission

- Taking home info into our own community
  - Reviewing documents of baptism, deepening our faith
  - Visitation outreach with school students and their families
  - Bring more social activity into Parish
  - Identify who are the people who are lonely
  - Processes of Parish Visitation, going into the street
  - Move the Parish into the domestic setting outside
  - Challenge to commit to do outreach so that people will be inspired to come to our church and be part of it.
- 
- What have we heard:
    - We need to approach all people not just 'Catholics'
    - Our tradition already holds all the information we already exists
    - Feeling challenged by the need to find and find the space for it in your life
    - Empower people to join – relying on the same people
    - You can be lonely in a large group too
    - We need to go out from the centre rather than attempt/expect people to be drawn in
    - Welcoming and checking in is so important
    - The importance of a safe neutral place/space -> people will come to coffee

## Topic: Structures

- Diocese to create resources for parishes/schools/communities in how to be synodal, specifically 'conversations in the spirit'; support leaders in implementing this process
- 
- A statement of Inclusion (from the 'top')
    - Parish/schools/communities create action plans in response to the statement -> to be kept accountable
  - Continue to invest in formation
- 
- Takes a long time to change culture. Build relationships as the foundation. Intentionally empower people to assume responsibility, work yourself out of a job.

- Priest to learn Parish Culture. Parish to know itself and communicate. Pass on a 'welcome book'
  - Offers governance training to communities. Consistently implement procedures and policies.
- 
- Print developed mission statements and vision statements and display
  - Create opportunities to share ideas/suggestions in order to hear the voice of the people (forums, assemblies, ongoing suggestion box)
  - At discussion forums/meetings: encourage small group discussion circular table/seating, food sharing as these create a level playing field, remove power imbalance, encourages open collegial conversation and food bonds people together.
  - Create/provide clear role descriptions/framework outline so parishioners in roles know the expectations of their job, but also so those interested in expressing interest in becoming involved may know what jobs entail.
- 
- Sacramental Program re-examining
  - Consolodation of resources
  - Hard look on allocating women in more roles, open doors
  - Youth pilgrimage  
(Deaneries, Priesthoods assignment, mentoring of youth leaders)

#### Topic: Mission and Outreach

- Provide a safe neutral space to gather that is not a church where people may be fearful of an agenda and to come with the idea of checking in with love and no other motive
    - So catching up for coffee, wine morning tea
  - Setting goals – now (short term) medium term, long term
- 
- We ask our Church leadership to take more risks in speaking out on respect and inclusion
- 
- Parish – school connection
  - Theology – deep understanding
  - Open dialogue
  - Have a deep understanding of doctrines of baptism and engage continuously with Parents to nurture faith

#### Topic: What does collaborative co-responsibility between ordained and non-ordained look like in a Synodal Parish on Mission?

- All Parishes to have a PPC with broad representation
- Make use of available resources for Formation for council members/volunteers
- Sharing reflections in the liturgy – give different people a chance to speak on occasions

#### Topic: Local Action

- Being Church together – Project/Plan

### 3. Notes:

- Knowing, understanding, articulate mission
- Enough leaders on the ground – orchestrate/motivate
- Networks, everybody connected
- Strong relationships parish – school, partnership especially secondary school
- Outreach in homes, shut ins, community
- Welcoming environment, encourages presence – involvement, accept people where they are at, what faith is like
- What does a synodal church on mission look and feel like?
  - How can we be church today? -> Mission. Lack of desire for organised “church”
  - Hopeful of people “returning home”/not judgemental
  - Listen
  - Welcome/belonging/participate at own level
    - Engage school/parish
    - Small communities/groups
  - Diversity of need/experience/ideals/vision
  - Openness to change – read the signs of the times
  - What and how – flexibility to offer different things
  - Say we are open but are we accepting/hypocrites?
- Actions –
  - Name tags, “Knowing” deeply priest/leadership can connect ‘helping people’
  - Not emails and fliers – we need conversation & accompanying people

### Session One/Round One:

- Inclusive not exclusive
- Are Catholic schools, schools for Catholics or schools for all?
- Spirit of the Church -> look after the individual person first
- Listening to the needs of the local community
- “Church is no place for snobs”
- Ask the people what they want, but not everyone will respond... we need a personal approach
  - We need to get to grassroots level
  - Influence must come from within, rather than from above
  - How do we get those who are committed to go out
  - How do we pull people in who have the skills, passion and connection
- “We encounter God in the people we encounter in life” – Pope Francis
- Being with people ...accompanying each other
- Stop clinging to rules
- Drawing people into community
- Inclusive: backgrounds
- Listening, acknowledging, asking
- If we want to draw people to us, we must be joyful ...we need to celebrate being catholic
- Being open to the Holy Spirit
- Jesus’ mission is what it looks like
- We have become an exclusive church

- Our sense of inclusivity has been lost
  - We need to rediscover our original call
- Welcoming people to Church – making it more authentic
- We cannot be judgemental
- Togetherness....getting people involved in doing things

What we heard:

- Welcome and inclusion
- Frustration with Church
- Traditional models of Church aren't hitting the mark
- Role of women
- Consistency – not a genuine representation of communities.....only structures
- We need to be prepared to 'try things'
- We have a desire to share our faith
- Inviting

- 
- Focus and set time limits
    - Now – next – future
    - What is the one thing to focus on – select it and do it well
  - Strategic – lead culture in school
  - Centacare – working with people at margins
    - Celebrate this
    - How we build on this
  - Working with parishes around us – working as a group
    - Better ideas and people to help achieve the mission
  - Communications and commitment head down
    - Silos
  - Positivity and confidence and what is gained
  - How do we continue the ongoing conversation
  - Strategic vision – plan and data
    - Measuring our successes and achievements
  - Show family and working with parishes and supporting each other.
  - Relevance of the church – how & why is it relevant to the people we are reaching out to
    - How do we make it relevant to the people we are reaching out to
  - Culture of connection
    - Setting strategic direction for the parish
    - The goals built with the culture of the parish
    - Members of the community become active through this
  - Relationships and making connections are important and similar – different cultures – making the connections with the cultures creates the relationship
  - Relationship – language building – Synodal? Journeying together
  - Is the Church important to you? But if you start with are relationships important to you?

## Round 1

- Enhance the lives of people
- Advocate for unchurched children – we are the church
- Make it vibrant, fresh
- Their story, our story – my story

- Jesus is the first story – young people have a first story to connect to
- Peak and interest
- Contribute to story
- Welcoming church – engage people with the skills given
  - Become part of the family of the church
- Include the school – the headmaster and religious instructors in the PPC – to be one body
- Need to encourage people to be drawn in
- When new ones come – need to make them feel welcome
- The communion – being together – walking on the journey – together
- Communion requires church to listen and dialogue
- Issues impacted by soul and culture context
- Need to talk through them
- Abundance of burden and love bring this to every encounter
- Schools are expression of Church – need to bring gift of faith need to surround by love and kindness
- Need to give young people skills and knowledge to work through
- Youth and mission- finding young challenging
- Need to be open to new ways and seeing the new things in gospel each time
- Open to humanity
- Open inviting and welcoming
- How do we bring all our elements and skills together
- Mission is service
- Outward facing – church moves to the people
- Create opportunities with students and the Parishioners
- Building Clergy roster
- Children connect with elderly
- Bridging the gap between Parish and School
- Service – modelling the value of the gospel and the patron
- Being strategic need to build bridges between parishes – help each other
- Parish and community – open to developing the things that we are most called to do
- Offer liturgy and life of prayer to people
- Sign of the times – being open to things
- Growing things organically – growing like branches and leaves of a tree
- Challenges
  - Getting young people engaged
  - Getting parents involved
  - Using technology – utilising skills of the Archdiocese
  - Young people connected with music
- Outreach has to be heightened – empowering people
- Inclusion of different cultures not connected in the Parish
- Community that is wider – but also deeper for people in the Parish
- Formation for all – catered to adults – youth – children
- Target outside
  - Visiting teams – go to hospitals etc.
  - Set hearts on fire
  - Music at homily – relevant to
- Parishes – gospel pathways
  - Turning toward God.
  - Proper scripture

- Then turning outwards – reach to people near and far
- Recognise that schools are there
  - They are inclusive and accepting
  - Acknowledge country
  - Daily prayer
  - Liturgies that connect
- Connect with people that we wouldn't connect with
  - Children that are marginalised – children with disabilities and poor etc.
- Pastoral care – outreach to poor – the homeless
  - Not staying within – reaching out
  - More involvement – more connectedness
- Indigenous and homeless support
- Deep service – working in Catholic house
- Heart of community so strong
- Educating families and communities of people on the fringe – homeless – leading to Church
- Strategic goal – short term, medium and long term
- Bringing people to God
- Energising them to go out to the world

## Round 2:

- Formation in schools
  - Keep inviting our members into different events, celebrations etc
  - More formation around what it means to be 'synodal'
  - Guides for parishes/schools for 'conversations in the spirit'
  - More meetings – time for collaboration in parish and school sectors
  - Listening to what people need
  - Elderly parish
    - Having to carry the load (there are only few who are able to help/lead/take on roles)
    - How do we provide formation for those elderly communities
  - We are (as a parish) trying very hard to be synodal, yet we are struggling with the listening. Not all voices are being heard.... It is still the loudest being heard. The Priest is the loudest.
  - Region # did not feel synodal
  - Keep bringing people together
    - The importance of exchanges
  - Teaching how to be synodal
  - How do we get the 'synodal' process in our communities
  - Goodwill vs blockers – People are craving connection and community
- 
- Connection between other areas of the community e.g. schools, aged care
  - Long-term formation to decrease barriers to being Catechists and onus on PPs and allow for increased presence. Importance of PP's support (Leadership team of the parish, like the PPC)
  - Shared vision/positive messaging ('branding') and consistent

## Action:

- Increased funding to allow for mission, not just maintenance etc
- Formation of PPC
  - Representative of different aspects of Parish Community

- Actively involved
- Transparent

- 
- We can better support our Parish Priests by sharing ministry. This requires further faith formation for our lay leadership.
  - Develop a shared vision, through an atmosphere of dialogue that breaks down barriers to meet the needs of the broader population of our parishes.
  - We need to consider what supports we can offer families to make services more comfortable and engaging (before, during, and after)

Action:

- Fidget toys, activity packs and cushions available at Mass

## Question 2

- Lap program
- Creative thinking – volunteers
- Vocation days for young people
- Jesuit offerings
- PPC involvement – leadership
- Guided by our Vision Statement
- Patience

## Vision

- Christ centred church that reaches out to people who feel excluded or rejected
- We have a lot of documents recommending action but need to start acting
- A Church close to the people
- Recognise role of women and remove institutional barriers to their full participation.
- Includes – increased participation of all members of the church
- Adult formation – 20 – 40-year-olds – Choose language which appeals to the newcomers. Explain traditions. We don't often explain the traditions.

## Actions:

- Adelaide has expanded new suburbs – facilities and priests. How to attract young people. We talk about combining Parishes but how does this relate to emerging suburbs.
- Pamphlet from Ecology Group – gave lots of tips about how to change. How do we use in schools – explain the traditions. Brisbane Liturgy.
- Concerns 1. Clergy Shortage. 2. Lay leadership formation. Desperate need (70s used to have flourishing leadership programs) 3. Connection between Parish and High School
- Go back to the parish and try to motivate more outreach and other activities
- Sharing mass attendance numbers – catholic mass not always engaging. Involving more participation questions about Parish boundaries and sense of amalgamation
- Regional assembly – shared info – not silos – introduce ideas from other places to our own Parish. Formation group used to be great.
- UK experience – extensive formation has really paid off. Amalgamation doesn't.
- Making Christ known and God loved in the family. Communion = Primary School and Confirmation = High School. Praying Rosary with Families. Honour the Saints and Traditions. Don't lose what we have.
- Stabilising what works – Western Deanery – collaborate with other Priests at Deanery meeting



- 1. Interest in formation of laity. 2. Concern about Confirmation in primary school only.
- Shortage of Clergy. Formation of Laity. Acknowledgement of our history
- First Communion in primary school and confirmation in high school
- Coping with new suburbs. Lack of Priests – import early. Formation and training.
- Build on what we have. Families are key to faith formation. Confirmation in High School.
- Getting rid of the institutional blocks. Important questions after primary school.
- We need proper boundaries.

## Response to Round 1

- All answers/responses are same or similar. Sharing duties. Clericalism – how to devolve roles
- Not an institution, not positive don't belong. Youth change some of the language.
- Different levels of desire to be inclusive.
- Pilgrim – Large group to discern our faith. Look outside box
- Action
  - Need to really talk action
  - Multi-cultural church – Catholicism only connection
  - Don't listen – going to hell
- No conflicting issues. How to work with wider Church to carry on mission. Becoming more welcoming.
- Widows group – Mass & Weekly Meeting. Encouraging other groups to gather
- Listen & Hear. Element of God in that. From imperfection to perfection
- Church – Christ centred. Cares about the past. Small Christian communities. "Close to the People" Who selects the people – people not included or rejected.
- Inclusion of women. So many documents – not much action. Inclusion of gay people.
- What can I do to motivate KW to be more outreaching
- Youth
- Faith formation starts in Family. Baptism from Non-Mass Families.

## Vision

### Q1. Synodal Church

- Fraternal. Reaches community. Feels like a family. Home. Shared response. People belong. Welcomes. Reaches out. Attends needs. Collaboration. With other faiths, government and society. Listens
- Listens to good and bad spirits. Recognises skills for changes. Enables plans for changes. Workable within scop. Stay positive, dream, praying strong formation to remind God's love and strength. In that our action be in common with God because of Communion. Generous and kind, and strength to keep going
- Listens and hears what is being said. Open to being responsive to people who are excluded. Pen to really acknowledging their issues, accepts their gifts. Loving and welcoming. Searching for God not an institution.
- Real listening as a Synodal Church. Remove clerical and organisational barriers. Reach out to people especially.
- Mission = patient kind and generous and open to different faiths, genders and sexual orientation. Women still not acceptable for certain roles. Remove hierarchical barriers. Accept mistakes and reconcile (sexual abuse – 40 years ago) Some people still struggling

- Everyone needs to take responsibility. Welcoming place – everyone belongs. Go out. Revived and not frustrated.
- Humility as an institution. Willing to learn and grow. Everyone to care for community. Values all members of the community.
- Church has been Synodal since beginning. Still looking for the lost one. Christ-Centred. Not only place of worship but community involvement. Sacraments.

## Round One

- Church in action – roll up our sleeves – smell the sheep
- Nourishing from the heart
- Burden on rural Clergy – missionary complication
- Play groups, Vinnies, Schools
- Human connect – people are lonely
- Advocacy – Federal And State Ministers
- First Nations
- Social Media Space – how do people meet these days – people are meeting differently. We need to be in that space and looking after each other.
- Nourish – human connection – people are lonely
- Voice – whose voice are we not hearing, who is not out
- Don't underestimate the influence of formation in schools
- Advocacy – how do we have influence/leverage social construct changes – State and Federal policy
- First Nations – unclear, reclear, get back to the Earth
- Formation – in all aspects of Church
- Inclusion

## Untitled Notes

- Relationship
  - Welcoming & being inclusive
  - Opportunities for encounter outside traditional structures
  - Invitation
- Formation
- Hospitality
  - Early Church – House Churches
  - Coming together
  - Remembering Jesus through story
  - Breaking bread together
  - Hymns
  - Social Relationship Building

- 
- Meeting the youth
  - Inclusive
  - Present
  - Knowing Baptismal rights
  - Welcoming
  - Invitational
  - Evangelisation
  - Formation
  - Social Justice
  - Youth needs

- Clarity
  - Engage with other perspectives
  - Accommodating of different cultures
  - Unity
  - Reliance on Christ
  - Life to the full
  - Knowledge of self
  - Service and stewardship
  - Open mindedness
- 
- Sharing resources
    - Using someone's gifts for greater good
    - Highlight positive community connections – how can we do this?
    - Build community up e.g. Parish Choir singing and Aged Care Homes etc.
  - Covid
    - Restarting and rebuilding but also not an excuse. Can't compare!! So different now.
  - Relationships develop where home is. Frequent meaningful connection. Bishop/delegate. Come to schools. Get a feel for the context
  - Diocesan Assembly great but we don't bring contacts with us
    - Raise your voice forums
  - Make young people feel seen and heard
  - Being Church together
    - Clergy, lay, parish, school
    - Having parish come to school and vice versa
    - Nursing homes etc hidden aspects of parishes
    - Gap between Baptism and school. Transition points. How do we engage them??
  - Gardening group once a month
  - Seniors group (programs)
  - Need someone with energy to set it up
  - Outreach in different formats not inward but outward
  - Put money where our value is
    - If we think it is important, let's invest in it