

Dear St. Mary's Parishioners and wider community,

Synod 2020 (a journey of change within the Catholic Church in the Archdiocese of Liverpool) is nearly upon us. We have been 'together on the road', voicing our opinions on change and affecting the future of our Archdiocese.

In December 2020 – I shared, we looked at and you gave your opinions on 120 proposals and 45 affirmations for Synod 2020 from the Liverpool Archdiocese. The Archdiocese has now narrowed that down to '19 Recommendations' based upon the 500 Synod members feedback. I share these with you below...

New SYNOD RECOMMENDATIONS –

(Shared at the Synod Members Meeting on Saturday 13th March 2021)

Evangelisation and Ministry

Synod Recommendation #1

Evangelisation

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

Synod Recommendation #2

Lay Ministry

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

Synod Recommendation #3

Ministry

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

Invite and Welcome in God's Name

Synod Recommendation #4

A More Inclusive Church

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

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

Synod Recommendation #5

Ecumenism

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

Synod Recommendation #6

Young People and Young Adults

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

Faith Formation

Synod Recommendation #7

Faith Formation and Adult Education

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

Synod Recommendation #8

Catholic Schools

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

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

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

Synod Recommendation #9

Children and Young People's Faith Formation

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

Prayer and Spirituality

Synod Recommendation #10

Spiritual Formation

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

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

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

Synod Recommendation #11

Sunday Liturgy and the Other Sacraments

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

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

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

Catholic Social Teaching and Community

Synod Recommendation #12

Catholic Social Teaching and Creation Care

A. We, the people of the Archdiocese, recommend that the pastoral plan include fostering a renewed understanding of Catholic Social teaching across the whole Archdiocese.

B. We, the people of the Archdiocese, recommend that the pastoral plan include the establishment of a “creation care team” that will assist parishes, deaneries, and schools in taking concrete steps to care for the environment.

Synod Recommendation #13

Love of Neighbour

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

Synod Recommendation #14

Community Building

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

Synod Recommendation #15

Communications and Media

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

Administration and Governance

Synod Recommendation #16

Governance and Synodality

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

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

Synod Recommendation #17

Property

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

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

Synod Recommendation #18

Parishes and Deaneries

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

Synod Recommendation #19

The Church in the Modern World

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

This is the completion of the list.

You may visit the Synod 2020 official website for further reading materials if you so wish using this link www.synod2020.co.uk

It is my responsibility, as St. Mary's Parish Synod Member to gather together my findings from the Synod Journey to take forward and vote on each of the Synod recommendations as follows;

- 1) This is a HIGH PRIORITY, which the Archdiocese should enact soon.
- 2) This is an EXCELLENT IDEA but not top of my list.
- 3) This does NOT strike me as vitally IMPORTANT.
- 4) This is NOT THE RIGHT WAY FORWARD for the Archdiocese.

This voting will happen on Synod Saturday – 19th June 2021.

If you have any further points to raise, opinions to make or you would just like further discussion/comment on anything to do with the recommendations and/or the Synod process, then please do not hesitate to get in touch using the e-mail address below:

synod2020stmarys@gmail.com

Similarly you can write to me at:

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Any contacts would need to be made in advance of the Synod 2020 Saturday to be considered. Many thanks.

Please pray for the journey for the Synod to end successfully and pray for me to vote correctly following the guide of Mary, the Blessed Mother of our Church and primary school, and the love and support of the Holy Spirit.

Paul Hodge

Mr Paul Hodge

(St. Mary's Church, Chorley – Synod Parish Member/Representative)