

Synod 2020 St Agnes and St Aidan's Huyton Proposals

Theme 1: *All called and gifted by God*

<p>Proposal 1</p>	<p>We call for a radical re-examination of the recruitment process and training of priests, paying particular attention to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the age of entry into training be raised to a minimum of 25 years, assuring some significant life and work experience. • Less time to be spent in seminaries, with formation taking place mainly in parishes within the diocese, giving appropriate lay people meaningful input into ongoing assessment during training. • Opening of ordination to married men.
<p>Proposal 2</p>	<p>The place of Youth in the Church - We need to enable young people, to give them a real <u>voice</u> within the church:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To hear what they need to access their spirituality and discern their own individual calling. • We need to find ways to dialogue with them where they are outside the church, as so many no longer attend Church services, so that they realise they are a vital part of the wider Church community. • Identify how to involve young people in leadership, mission and ministry in the Church. • Embrace new technologies, social media, on-line communities – access to spirituality through the various mediums of modern communications.
<p>Proposal 3</p>	<p>The role of women in the Church - How can the reality of <u>all</u> being called and gifted be honoured in the way women are currently involved in the Church? We as a Church need to look at radical change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Women Deacons is a must. Long overdue! If it wasn't for women in this Parish, it would grind to halt.' • Properly discerning the call to have women ordained as Priests. • Involvement of women in roles of pastoral and spiritual leadership and in decision-making at all levels within the Church.
<p>Proposal 4</p>	<p>Embrace vulnerability - We need to reach out and embrace vulnerability. To welcome and value the gifts of all, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giving opportunities for their voice to be heard; and • Creating meeting spaces within the church and through displays.
<p>Proposal 5</p>	<p>The role of the laity in the life of the Church – Encourage and value the contribution of the lay person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities should be given for training across all age groups, recognising the complementarity of differing calls and gifts, to support the life of the church and its needs. • Create team ministry, developing the individual gifts of the laity across all ages to lead committees for different needs.

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Theme 2: Sharing the Mission of Jesus

Proposal 1	<p>Enable Ongoing Spiritual and Human Development (Formation) - Explore ways of deepening our relationship with Jesus and how we can use the richness of this relationship in how we relate to others through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retreats; • Continuing listening groups; • Helping adults to share faith and life; • Keeping informed by, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Talks from 'Experts', for example, Social Justice, Issues of our time, the integrity and care of creation, the environment, etc. - Understanding the Scriptures; and • Making good and updated literature available.
Proposal 2	<p>Look at Mission as attitudes and ways of being in the world:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Through our presence to the people we encounter; - Reflect the message of the Gospel by our lives and our love for one another; - The way we behave – Congruence of our belief and our action through: Openness to new ideas, inclusivity, open-mindedness, humility, kindness, compassion, tolerance, being non-judgmental and open to challenges and change.
Proposal 3	<p>Ecumenical Participation in Christ's Mission - More liaison with other denominations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sharing and exchanging ideas for the good of the whole; - Working together in terms of compassion, inclusiveness and tolerance to embody the mission of Jesus; - Living out the Gospel values in an increasingly secular world.
Proposal 4	<p>The Archdiocese to undertake a fundamental, systematic and innovative review of the facilities that we have in our Parishes that are lying redundant so that they can all be used or brought into use as a vital part of the mission of the Church.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-ordinated use of the many empty presbyteries e.g. offering them as a place of welcome to rest, to shower, change of clothes, health services, etc. for the homeless, asylum seekers and other vulnerable groups • Parishes rise to the challenges of sharing the mission of Jesus by opening our Church doors to non-liturgical occasions, community events, groups (breakfast clubs, young mothers, 12 step groups, etc.) and thereby fostering community spirit through togetherness, compassion and love. • It is vital that there is funding for roles to enable individual Parishes to adopt new Policies and carry out the mission.
Proposal 5	<p>Care of Creation - Give focus to appreciating and caring for our beautiful world through creating eco-balanced, sustainable Parishes. Raising awareness of what is happening in the world, our impact on it and the need for resources to be available for everyone</p>

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Theme 3: How we pray together

<p>Proposal 1</p>	<p>Our Churches To find ways and means to safely keep our churches open – To serve people's much expressed need to find a place for quiet reflection and peace. To have opening times publicised on all Parish websites, offering opportunities for carers and working people. Maybe co-ordinating this in each Pastoral area and so offering a variety of times in different churches. Ensure that Churches are warm and well-maintained. The elderly and infirm cannot tolerate cold and dilapidated buildings and our places of worship must be worthy and welcoming</p>
<p>Proposal 2</p>	<p>In Relation to the Celebration of Mass There needs to be a real link between our everyday lives and what we meet in Mass and at the same time, we need to restore the 'Mystery/Mystical' element. There is a need for more periods of silence during Mass. Quality of Music – Varied types of music and opportunities for singing as well as listening to music. One person mentioned reviving the prayer that used to be said at the end of Mass (St Michael the Archangel) to pray protection against evil in the world and in the Church.</p>
<p>Proposal 3</p>	<p>Understanding Families in the Modern Age As an Archdiocese we need to be proactive in understanding the current dynamics of family life, to engender confidence and consequently offer the tools and materials to enable and support families in praying together and passing on Christ's message to future generations.</p>
<p>Proposal 4</p>	<p>Praying in Different Ways People have a hunger for meaning and spirituality which can be supported in a variety of ways. Valuing and offering different ways of coming together in prayer and liturgy, building on that which already exists such as: bereavement groups, reconciliation services, prayer groups with different focuses, and retreats offering a variety of experiences and lengths. These ideas would support people to find God in the everyday, to listen to Him and to discern.</p>
<p>Proposal 5</p>	<p>New Opportunities and Innovation in prayer Be innovative in creating opportunities for prayer. Create events such as prayer vigils, lay-led prayer sessions during the week; offer prayer times for specific groups/needs e.g. Schools</p>

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Theme 4: Building community, nurturing belonging

Proposal 1	<p>Living the Faith We should continue the work in our Parishes, of looking to each other and supporting each other to grow in faith. To become an attractive community to other people we need to show God's love through our actions, words and deeds, and to share our faith speaking their language 'smell like the sheep'.</p>
Proposal 2	<p>Nurturing the Young of our Community Engage more with Catholic Schools in the Parish to strengthen the links:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bringing the children to Church on a regular basis, encouraging them and the teachers to become more involved in the Parish community, possibly creating display areas within church which are the responsibility of the school. • Look at the religious education taught in schools to ensure that it engages the children and supports the learning and experiences of their faith. • We should find time in the weekly masses for the children to engage in scripture such as Little church/children's liturgy; have monthly masses within schools dedicated to the children with scripture at their level and read by them. • Develop groups for young people where they can experience a Christian community and to support and let them know that God is with them always through both good and challenging times.
Proposal 3	<p>Faith in Action Parishes to be models of faith in action through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Charitable Events and other Social Activities e.g. Parish BBQ, Ceilidh, etc. • Child Friendly events. • Publishing/communicating community events to bring people together using all mediums of communication including modern technologies to capture the young.
Proposal 4	<p>Making Church more Inclusive and Welcoming Our churches should also be open to meeting different needs in the local community, to be identified as the 'people's church', not just the establishment. Make Church more inclusive and welcoming by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating / opening leadership opportunities for women. • Making Church buildings multi-purpose and in easily accessible locations. • Invest in community outreach initiatives i.e. for the elderly, vulnerable, disenfranchised, etc. • Visible displays e.g. Church banners welcoming 'ALL'. • Promoting Parish Welcoming groups at all the Liturgies and exploring opportunities to engage with people e.g. printing welcome cards for people we know/become aware of, who are new to the area, 'We miss you' cards, personal invitations to Church social events, etc.
Proposal 5	<p>Structures We propose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reduction in the number of Parishes and to extend the concept of belonging beyond present Parish Boundaries – sharing activities, resources and networking. • Administrative tasks need to be the responsibility of paid staff, across the whole pastoral area leaving Priests free to focus on their ministry. • We propose a move towards a more synodal structure of decision-making in the spirit of subsidiarity. Over-reliance on e.g. Bishop's conference/Rome carries the danger of causing paralysis and strangling the life out of our communities We encourage our hierarchy to be brave and trusting enough to take risks to bring about positive change. • Pay urgent attention to the danger of transposing the 'business model' into our Dioceses in a way that obscures the vision of the Beatitudes as the model for Church as a Community.