



**Plenary Council 2020**  
Listen to what the Spirit is saying...

## **St Aloysius Catholic Parish, 84 Keightley Rd., Shenton Park, 6008, Western Australia. 9 November 2018**

Fifteen members of our parish including our parish priest, each with a printed Listening and Encounter Guide (copy attached) formed three groups and successfully followed the 4-step process as outlined in our Guide. The three topics and the record of the small group Listening and Dialogue discussions are given below, followed by additional Step 04 comments on the three topics from the whole group.

### **Table One (Yellow Group)**

Topic: *That the Spirit calls ourselves, as a parish and our Catholic Church leaders to promote an environment in which individuals develop and expand their faith to help themselves, and to help lead others, our primary concern is the difficulty of our shared mission to reach Catholic young people and help them to grow in the Church and to follow Catholic guidelines in their personal lives.*

Comments:

- The Parish needs to encourage-appropriate liturgical involvement at Mass with a special focus on engaging young Catholics who do attend Mass - Youth Mass, picnics? Youth Group? musicians, youth choir, Children's liturgy reporting back to congregation, Mothers' Day Fathers' Day celebration for example.
- Develop a pastoral focus on learning to connect with younger Catholics effectively in their own way – how do others do it? A local and National issue!
- The Liturgy needs to be broadly accessible and understood. The Church in Australia needs to tolerate difference so that young and old, those from different cultural backgrounds, those preferring traditional formats and those preferring interesting new ways of celebrating can all find a place in the Church's Masses.
- Homilies and prayers to be inclusive and have a focus on accompanying younger Catholics.
- Reconciliation should be an important part of Parish life with relevant penances being assigned to help make the Sacraments real and better understood.
- We need to help teach the core Catholic values, again a local and National issue.

- The Parish needs to stay open to welcoming back the ones whose faith has become unlinked but who are experiencing trouble and also the distanced Catholics who only appear briefly at Easter and Christmas and disappear again.
- We need to greatly expand the ways the Catholic Church socially engage Catholic younger people.
- Young Catholics may not necessarily be distanced from the Church because of thought-through rejection - it may be through pressures of time. How do we develop integrated ways to accompany our young people?
- Need faith formation that attracts the young How do we deal with the competition we see in our own Parish between attending Church activities and sport, especially Sunday sport? This affects the participation of young people and their parents as well.
- We, and the leaders of the Church, need to learn from younger Catholics and from those who do know how to effectively engage with them whether it is the young people themselves, family members, the Church's best youth catechists or others who accompany them on making their life's choices.
- To encourage our families and our friends to come to or return to Church
- That the Church, clergy and lay, explicitly show Christ to the world in Australia
- The Spirit is asking Catholics to remain faithful in difficult times
- Listen with an open heart and mind to Pope Francis
- Hope
- Make the message of the Church something we and youth can trust and rely upon
- In Step 04, the group discussion, the comment was made that the young should be made inclusive by the young and ways for encouraging that interaction should be a major focus of the Catholic Church in Australia and disseminated to dioceses and parishes as a commonly and urgently needed form of assistance.

## Table Two (Red Group)

Topic: *That the Spirit calls us into engagement with others concerning our Faith, reaching out to youth, to Catholics who have ceased to practice, to people generally and to continue to promote the better inclusion of women*

- We need to keep the faith regardless of the problems with the Church so that we can effectively engage with our faith and reach out to others expressing our Christian values.
- We need to be a prayerful community sharing the experience of the Eucharist and the various opportunities for prayer, thankful for our Parish Priest and supporting our experience of being a Parish community as brothers and sisters in Christ

- Engaging with others in our parish is a source of faith enrichment.
- We look to the Church to provide other opportunities for faith development
- Our engagement with others at Church is a source of encouragement.
- The Spirit asks us to be unafraid in confessing our faith and standing up for the values we believe in.
- We should have the courage to speak about our belief in God although many find it intimidating.
- We should remain aware of our faith in meeting life's circumstances.
- We should offer one another encouragement
- As Christ's people, we should develop ways to engage the young
- We should reach out to others.
- In Step 04 the wider group discussion, it was stressed that engagement and reaching out was accepted as important but how exactly was in need of Australia-wide guidance.
- The role of women in the Church was an important topic as sexism is thought to turn many away. On the other hand, the under-reporting of women's very significant intellectual contribution, their leadership and their massive contribution to maintaining the faith in the Catholic Church, does not help either and should be addressed.

### Table Three (Blue Group)

Topic: *To return the Church to the pilgrim church of Jesus requires regeneration*

- God asks us to believe and have courage
- There is a need to reconcile our clergy with the new scientific understanding of the human person represented in social norms today.
- The Spirit asks for an inclusive and less dogmatic and judgemental church orthodoxy
- Recover the joyousness of the Gospel and the celebration of Mass without reducing the reverence.
- Reciprocal lay/clerical sharing of responsibility for carrying the church into the future.
- Regeneration can come through homilies that connect the teachings of the Gospels to the real experiences of the people in the pews today.
- More emphasis on Christ-centred practice and teaching in Catholic schools. Secularised versions of social justice issues taught without reference to their Christian source is not sufficient to create future Catholics.

- The church needs a huge cultural change from the top down and from the bottom to create a viable path forward.
- Listen to Pope Francis on how to regenerate the Church.
- God asks of us a missionary approach to being the church
- To regenerate the Church, God wants us to bring back the youth
- Seminary training and the ongoing faith development of priests calls for the scholarly influence of academics in the physical and social sciences for a broader understanding of the human person in the world of today. Too much of doctrine is based on scientific understanding that is unacceptable today. The documents of Vatican II, the Sensus Fidelium and updated knowledge each have a role to play in regeneration.
- In Step 04 the wider Parish group agreed on the need for regeneration and added that the prayerful approach of the Plenary 2020 Preliminary Process seemed to be producing positive results. Previous associations between change and fragmentation seem to be being overcome and a re-alignment of change with commitment taking its place.
- A parishioner observed the prayerful approach to regeneration seemed to successfully defuse anger over the clerical mishandling of abuse but structural change and changes to official church practice must come.
- Another feared the disappointment that not being listened to by the bishops might incur.
- Several agreed the level and nature of clerical apology following the Royal Commission seemed inadequate considering the harm caused.