

May 2017



Diocese of Paisley

Acts of The First Diocesan Synod

The New Evangelisation & The Role of the Laity



Acts of The First Diocesan Synod

The New Evangelisation
& The Role of the Laity



Our Synod

Paisley Diocese

All together sharing the Good News



Diocese of Paisley



My dear brothers and sisters



Almost three years ago, on the Feast of Saint Margaret of Scotland, I had the joy of announcing to you, the people of Paisley diocese, the convocation of a Synod to be held in Eastertide 2016 on the *Role of our Lay Faithful in the New Evangelisation* and I asked you to join me in prayer for the success of our Synod as we implored the protection, guidance and intercession of the Blessed Mother, Our Lady of Paisley.

Today, on the Feast of Saint Columba, I have just as great gladness in presenting to you the Canonical *Acta* of our Synod that gather up the fruit of much work across the diocese in prayer, catechesis, consultation and Synod sessions. I am convinced these *Acta* contain the words of the Holy Spirit to our diocese, spoken from the lips of our faithful. In its pages *we hear what the spirit says to the church* in Paisley. (Rev 2:7)

We publish our *Acta* on the Feast of Saint Columba, perhaps Scotland's most fruitful evangeliser, who spread the Faith in our land as part of a great missionary effort to our shores. Settling in Iona with a small community he founded an abbey that would become not only the centre of Christianity in Scotland but a Gospel leaven that would influence Europe for centuries to come. We pray for his friendship, example and intercession to be with us – together with Saints Mirin, Margaret and John Ogilvie – in the fresh effort of evangelisation that the Holy Spirit wills us to undertake.

In the Liturgy for Columba's Feast Saint Paul reminds us how Christians are a people chosen by God in whom Christ's message has found a home, and Jesus encourages us to draw out good things from the store of goodness He has given us, just as a sound tree produces good fruit. Today we feel the choice of God upon us as well as His challenge to draw out goodness from the store His Spirit has given us in this moment of our diocesan history. Our Synod is surely a store of goodness that the Lord asks us to draw upon to chart our course for the years that lie ahead and which we embrace with joy and hope.

There are so many people to thank for their tireless work that it would be impossible to name them. I thank our clergy, religious and lay faithful throughout our parishes, schools and associations for their amazing generosity of spirit in engaging our process; I thank our preparatory commission and secretariat, our sessions and conference team and our delegates; I thank our post-Synod steering and task groups; special commendations to Mgr. Gerry Gallagher for compiling our *Acta* and to Mgr. Denis Carlin for moderating our Synod to this end.

May the mercy of God Who has begun this good work in us bring it to completion through the intercession of Our Blessed Mother, Our Lady of Paisley.

With every blessing,

+John
Bishop of Paisley

Sources of our Synod

The principal inspiration and key document of our Synod is:

Pope Francis,

- Apostolic Exhortation on the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today's World, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 24th November 2013.

Other important Church documents which have informed our Synod reflection, discussion and conclusions are:

The Second Vatican Ecumenical Council:

- Dogmatic Constitution on The Church, *Lumen Gentium*, 21st November 1964.
- Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes*, 7th December 1965.
- Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church, *Ad Gentes*, 7th December 1965.

Pope Paul VI,

- Apostolic Exhortation on Evangelisation, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 8th December 1975.

Pope John Paul II,

- Encyclical Letter on the Permanent Validity of the Church's Missionary Mandate, *Redemptoris Missio*, 7th December 1990.

Pope Benedict XVI,

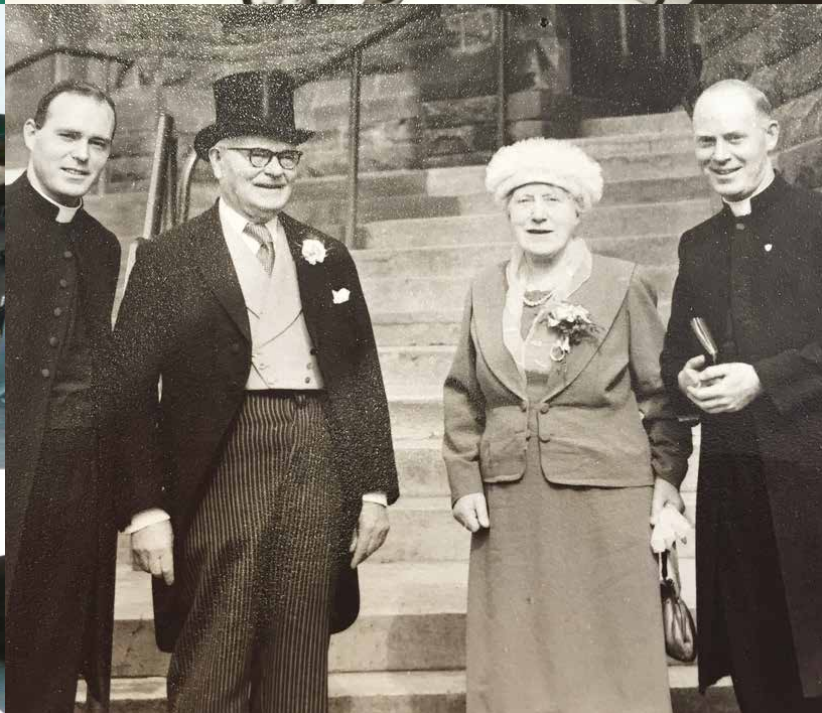
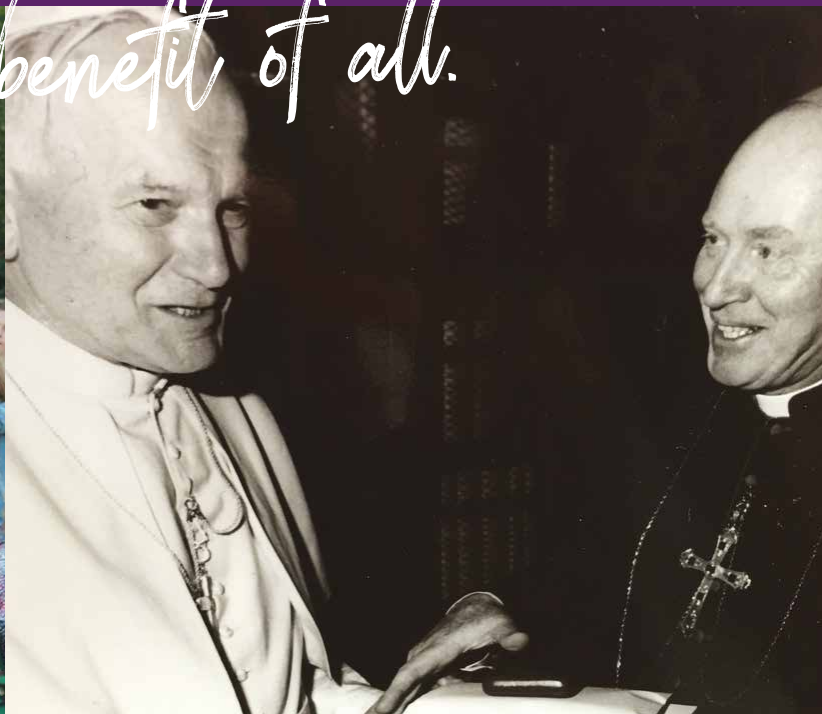
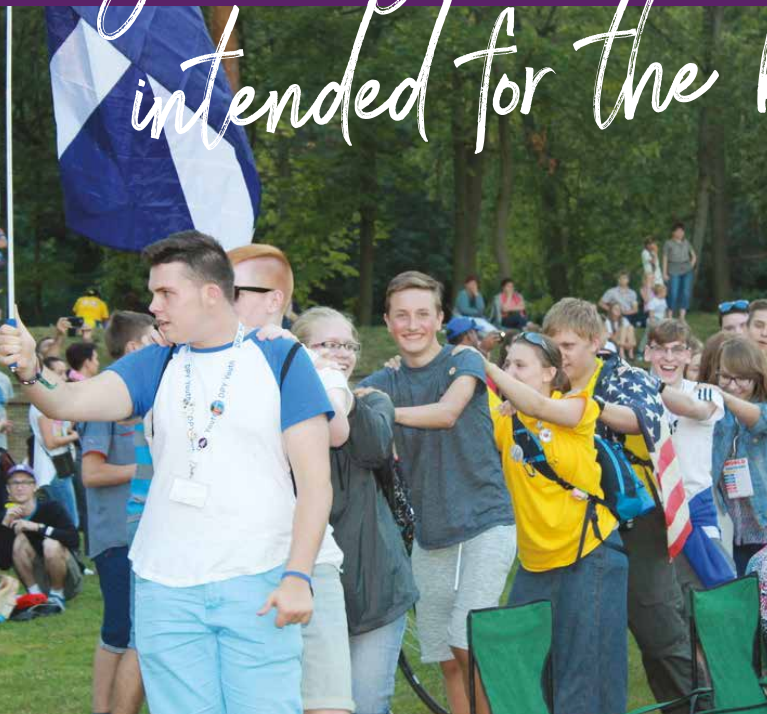
- Homily at Mass for the New Evangelisation, 16th October 2011.
- Apostolic Visit to the USA, 15th-20th April 2008, (*passim*).

“She prayed
to the Blessed
Mother to help
her to use her
talents to help
working poor.”

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*"So it is that the different members
of the Church have a variety of gifts,
given by the Holy Spirit, but
intended for the benefit of all."*



Introduction

The Diocese of Paisley



I.1. The Diocese of Paisley: Historical Background

The Diocese of Paisley was erected as a Suffragan See of the Archdiocese of Glasgow by the Apostolic Constitution *Maxime interest* of the 25 May 1947.

Originally the territory of our Diocese was the historical county of Renfrew. It now comprises the three local government areas of East Renfrewshire, Inverclyde, Renfrewshire. The area covered by the Diocese has a total population of approximately 346,967. The Cathedral City is Paisley.

In area Paisley is the smallest Diocese in Scotland while it is fourth largest in population with an estimated Catholic population of 90,060 (twenty-six percent of the total population). For the first time in 2001 the National Census included questions about religious affiliation which revealed that the actual Catholic population was higher than our estimates had allowed.

The census in 2011 included similar questions and allows us to begin to track a more accurate statistical picture of the Church in Scotland.

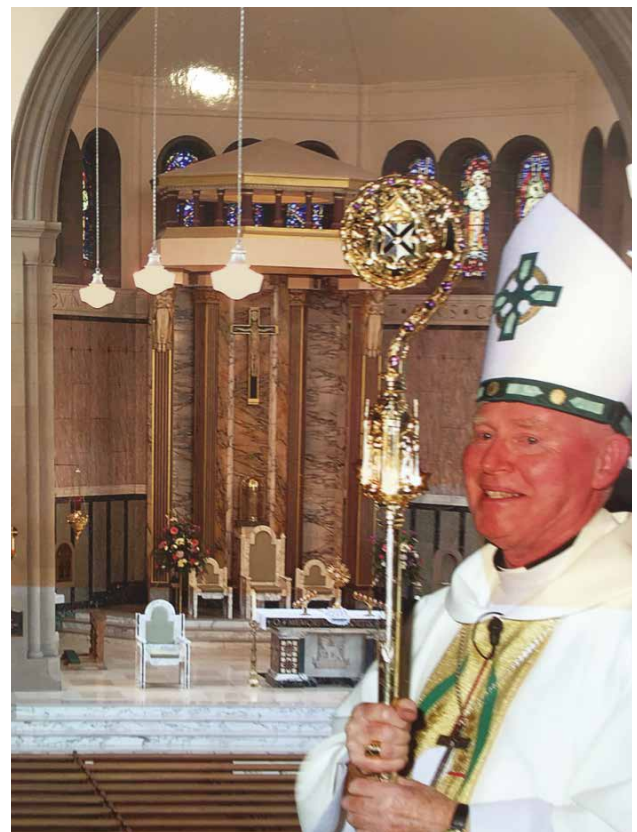
There have been five Bishops in the seventy years of our existence as a Diocese: Rt. Rev. James Black (1948-1968), Rt. Rev. Stephen McGill, PSS (1968-1988), Rt. Rev. John Aloysius Mone (1988-2004), Rt. Rev. Philip Tartaglia (2004-2012), Rt. Rev. John Keenan (2014-).

Historically it is believed that St. Mirin, a Celtic monk, founded his Church at Paisley. This monastery became a Benedictine Abbey of the Cluniac foundation and the tomb of St. Mirin in a chapel of the Abbey was a major shrine in Scotland until the Reformation. The Abbey was dedicated to Our Lady, St. James and St. Mirin and became a wealthy foundation because of its connection with the royal house of Stewart which originated in Renfrew. King James IV, in particular, was a frequent visitor to the Abbey and the tomb of St Mirin. The Abbey fell into disrepair after the Reformation and the tomb of St. Mirin was destroyed. The Abbey Church (by now in the hands of the Church of Scotland) was restored in the nineteenth century and is now the town Church of Paisley and a source of civic pride. There is again a chapel within the Abbey dedicated to St. Mirin.

At the time of the Reformation Paisley was known as a “nest of papistry” as late as 1600, forty years after the Scottish Parliament passed the Acts against Popery. The Scottish Jesuit Martyr, St. John Ogilvie, who was executed at Glasgow in 1615, is known to have ministered in the Renfrewshire area before his betrayal, and is believed to have celebrated Mass in Paisley, Lochwinnoch and Newark (now Port Glasgow).

In 1808 the first Catholic church built in the west of Scotland after the Reformation was St. Mirin's, in Paisley. This Church, rebuilt in 1932, became the Cathedral Church of the Diocese in 1948. St. Mary's Parish in Greenock was also established in 1808.

At the restoration of the Scottish Hierarchy in 1878 the territory of the Diocese was part of the Archdiocese of Glasgow. In 1947 Pope Pius XII raised Glasgow to the rank of a Metropolitan See for a new Province of Glasgow and established the two new dioceses of Motherwell (the county of Lanark) and Paisley (the county of Renfrew). He also altered the territory of the Archdiocese of Glasgow (north Ayrshire was transferred to the diocese of Galloway).



I.2. The Diocese of Paisley: Our current overall situation

Parishes: We have thirty-three Parishes organised into three deaneries based on local authority areas. Several parishes are “clustered” with one Parish Priest serving two parishes: St. Fergus’ and St. James’, Paisley; St. John Bosco’s and St. Bernadette’s, Erskine; and St. James’ and St. Columba’s, Renfrew.

Deaneries: St. Mirin’s Deanery (Renfrewshire) comprises: In Paisley: St. Mirin’s, St. James’, St. Charles’, St. Peter’s, St. Mary’s, St. Fergus’ and St. Paul’s. Outside Paisley - Our Lady of Lourdes, Bishopton; St. Fillan’s, Houston; Christ the King, Howwood; St. John Bosco’s and St. Bernadette’s, Erskine; St. Margaret’s and St. Aidan’s, Johnstone; St. Conval’s, Linwood; St. James’ and St. Columba’s, Renfrew.

St. Mary’s Deanery (Inverclyde) comprises: In Greenock: St. Mary’s, St. Laurence’s, St. Patrick’s, St. Joseph’s and St. Andrew’s, and then St. Ninian’s, Gourrock; St. Colm’s, Kilmacolm; St. John’s, Holy Family and St. Francis’, Port Glasgow; St. Joseph & St. Patrick, Wemyss Bay.

St. John’s Deanery (East Renfrewshire) comprises: St. John’s, Barrhead; St. Thomas, Neilston; St. Joseph’s, Clarkston; St. Bridget’s, Eaglesham, and St. Cadoc’s, Newton Mearns.

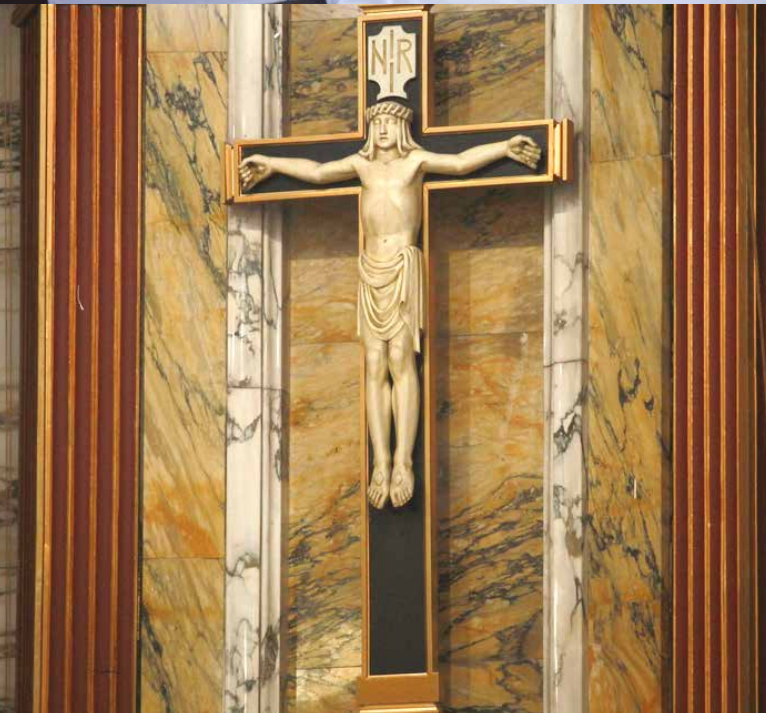
Priests: We have fifty-eight priests, among whom twenty-nine are parish priests, one is an administrator, two are assistants and fourteen are retired. Of others serving outside the diocese: one is Rector of Scots College, Rome, two serve as chaplains in the Armed Forces, one is completing further studies in Rome, one is at the Holy See and three are on loan, two serving in Chile and one in Austria. We have four priests on loan to Paisley from other dioceses. This year we will have one ordination to the priesthood of our three seminarians.

Catholic Population and Number of Parishes:

Our Catholic Population is 90,060, shared by our deaneries: St. John’s (20,135), St. Mirin’s (39,769) and St. Mary’s (30,156). Average estimated Catholics per parish is 2,729¹. According to the National Census of Scotland, Paisley has around ten percent of our Scottish Catholic population (841,053 Catholics in Scotland and 90,060 in Paisley diocese), spread as 39,769 in Renfrewshire, 30,156 in Paisley and 20,135 in East Renfrewshire.²

*“it is important
that our Synod
brings the whole
Diocese together.”*

*"This Synod is an important step
in refreshing our Church and
strengthening our shared witness
to the Lord."*



1. Presentation of the Synod Document

Rt. Rev John Keenan,
Bishop of Paisley



1. Presentation of the Synod Document

Rt. Rev John Keenan,
Bishop of Paisley

From Evangelii Gaudium

Each particular Church, as a portion of the Catholic Church under the leadership of its bishop, is called to missionary conversion.

It is the primary subject of evangelisation, since it is the concrete manifestation of the one Church in one specific place, and in it “the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church of Christ is truly present and operative”.

It is the Church incarnate in a certain place, equipped with all the means of salvation bestowed by Christ, but with local features. Its joy in communicating Jesus Christ is expressed both by a concern to preach him to areas in greater need and in constantly going forth to the outskirts of its own territory or towards new sociocultural settings.

Wherever the need for the light and the life of the Risen Christ is greatest, it will want to be there.

To make this missionary impulse ever more focused, generous and fruitful, I encourage each particular Church to undertake a resolute process of discernment, purification and reform.

The bishop must always foster this missionary communion in his diocesan Church, following the ideal of the first Christian communities, in which the believers were of one heart and one soul (cf. Acts 4:32). To do so, he will sometimes go before his people, pointing the way and keeping their hope vibrant. At other times, he will simply be in their midst with his unassuming and merciful presence. At yet other times, he will have to walk after them, helping those who lag behind and – above all – allowing the flock to strike out on new paths.

In his mission of fostering a dynamic, open and missionary communion, he will have to encourage and develop the means of participation proposed in the Code of Canon Law, and other forms of pastoral dialogue, out of a desire to listen to everyone and not simply to those who would tell him what he would like to hear.

Yet the principal aim of these participatory processes should not be ecclesiastical organisation but rather the missionary aspiration of reaching everyone.

Pastoral ministry in a missionary key seeks to abandon the complacent attitude that says: “We have always done it this way”. I invite everyone to be bold and

creative in this task of rethinking the goals, structures, style and methods of evangelisation in their respective communities. A proposal of goals without an adequate communal search for the means of achieving them will inevitably prove illusory.

I encourage everyone to apply the guidelines found in this document generously and courageously, without inhibitions or fear.

The important thing is to not walk alone, but to rely on each other as brothers and sisters, and especially under the leadership of the bishops, in a wise and realistic pastoral discernment.

Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 31-33



1. Presentation of the Synod Document

Rt. Rev John Keenan, Bishop of Paisley

1. Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

It is with joy and firm confidence in God's providence that I offer this Synodal Document on the New Evangelisation and the essential role of the Laity in it. Evangelisation is the great task of our time and one into which our local Church in Paisley diocese is gathered.

- 2 Our Paisley Synod is the fruit of a work in which every member of our diocesan family has been engaged. To you, parishioners, brother priests, deacons and religious, to you families and single people, young and old, I offer this initiative for the renewal and encouragement of your faith. Please read and reflect prayerfully on the work and output of our Synod and hear God speaking directly to you. The Spirit is at work in our diocese and my prayer is that this summary of the Synod's reflections will give rise to many and varied initiatives that are the fruit of a generous response in the hearts of the people of this diocese. The two words that have been spoken are: Evangelisation and the Laity. Let us not be fearful at the enormity of the task but rather trustful that God will bring to completion the work that he has started within us.
3. Pope Francis is calling for a revolution in our thinking and acting. We have to stop trying to save the Church and instead try to spread the Gospel. The need for change is urgent and it has to be radical in everything we do. We cannot leave things as they presently are. The Church exists to evangelise and so we have to renew any structures, language or styles that get in the way of our going out to spread the Good News. We want everyone to feel included. It means parishes becoming centres of mission and getting back into the homes and everyday lives of everyone in the area, inviting all without exclusion to participate in our joyful community. Above all we have to reach out to the margins and those areas where the light of Christ is needed most.
4. Very early in my time as your Bishop, I proposed that we hold a Diocesan Synod on the theme of New Evangelisation with particular emphasis on the role and participation of the Laity. My vision was of a diocese where we were all together sharing the Good News. My hope is that we can re-shape the

Diocese of Paisley within the perspective of the full and collaborative leadership of laity, religious, deacons and priests, in parishes re-founded on a new and sustained evangelisation for growth in the generation ahead.

5. After a year of prayer, catechesis and consultation around the diocese feedback was gathered and one hundred and sixty delegates, chosen from every parish, school and diocesan group - including clergy, religious and a substantial majority of lay faithful - met in five Synod Sessions to reflect upon what the people had said and use this as the basis of their own discussion and deliberation. In the final session they voted on and approved the core of our Synod Document which we believe to be the combined work of the Holy Spirit and the People of God of the Paisley diocese. This document, once approved by the Holy See and shared with our Scottish bishops, will serve as a guiding light for our diocesan life, renewal and development in the generation ahead.
6. The Synod Document has the following structure:
 - (1) A short introductory, historical and statistical profile of the Diocese of Paisley;
 - (2) The Charter for the Diocese of Paisley contains the ten principle ideas that repeated themselves throughout the prayer, catechesis and consultation among the people. These were confirmed in the reflection, discussion and deliberations of delegates in the sessions and in the final vote;
 - (3) The third section, "Foundations" provides some theological underpinning of each point of the Charter and assures us that our work is of a piece with the mind of the Church;
 - (4) Principles & Practicalities;
 - (5) Appendices.
7. The "Principles" are summary statements that represent the key output of the Synod's working sessions. It is from these statements that the Charter is derived. "Practicalities" list many suggestions made in Synod Sessions. These are only suggestions, not an acid test of the success of our Synod or Charter, and are there to stimulate further ideas and initiatives and help parishes, schools and groups discern how best to implement the Charter in their own place and time. The Principles and Practicalities

1. Presentation of the Synod Document

Rt. Rev John Keenan,
Bishop of Paisley

were also confirmed in the reflection, discussion and deliberations of delegates in the sessions and in the final vote. Each of the Principles and Practicalities obtained a two-thirds majority of the vote of the Synod and assembly. I have also drawn some conclusions based on our Synod Consultation, Discussion and voting and outline how I intend us to implement the Synod's Principles and Practicalities. Appendices make available the constitutive documents of our Synod and give the background to how we reached our Charter points with the raw materials of our year-long catechesis and consultation. Thus, we can see how the Charter is truly the work of the whole people of the diocese.

8. My dear sisters and brothers, I commend this document to you as providing the framework and the basis for our continuing reflection and discussions on the future pastoral direction of our Diocese. Much has been achieved in the last 70 years, but now we must take up the mantle of those who have gone before us, in order to meet the challenges facing the church of today. The two great words of Pope Francis' pontificate are accompaniment and discernment. I hope and pray that as we walk together on the road mapped out by our Synod, we will indeed be able to discern the sure way forward with the help of the Holy Spirit and with the mutual support that we provide to each other as brothers and sisters in Christ.

Yours devotedly in Christ,

+John
Bishop of Paisley

*"The church
is born primarily
of Christ's total
self-giving for
our salvation."*



*"When we live with love,
we grow in holiness."*



2. A Charter for the Diocese of Paisley



2. A charter for the Diocese of Paisley

2. A Charter for the Diocese of Paisley

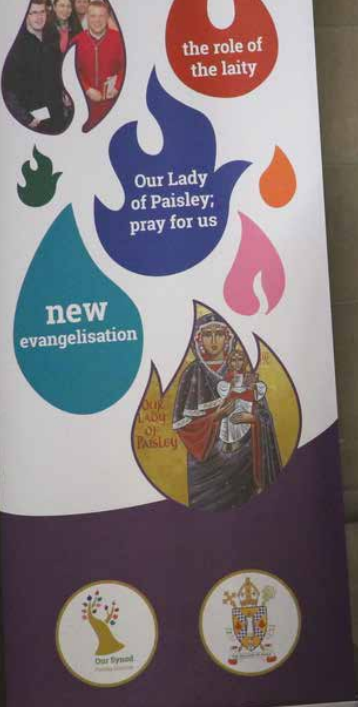
The Diocese of Paisley values, promotes and actively encourages the role of the laity in the new evangelisation as an important way to achieve the mission of the Church as, all together, we share the Good News. Through mutual responsibility, dialogue and action, all members of the diocesan community - including clergy, religious and laity - will work in collaborative ministry to provide a model of Church relevant to our context as an example of what can be accomplished in the future.

The Diocese of Paisley, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and through the patronage of Our Lady of Paisley, St. Mirin and St. Margaret, will work towards being a faith-filled community where:

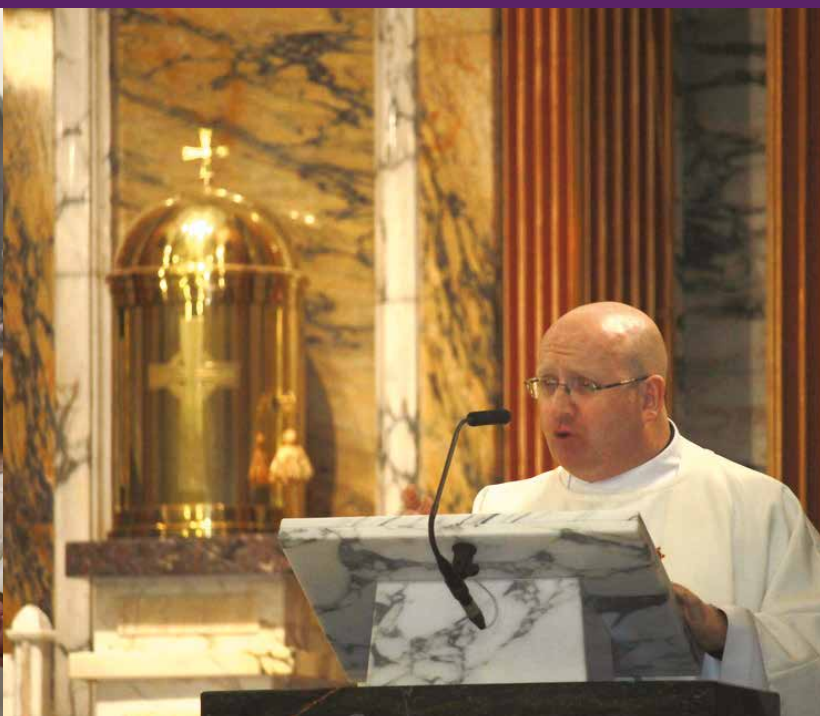
1. We are committed to effective evangelisation centred on each Christian's personal relationship with Jesus Christ and a life lived with faith, hope and charity.
2. We recognise and celebrate that it is in the Sacred Liturgy, above all, that we encounter Jesus Christ as the source of our lives, our salvation and our worship. The Eucharist gives life and reality to the Church and is, therefore, the source and summit of our Christian life.
3. We recognise that Faith formation and active discipleship are of fundamental importance in developing the role of the laity in the new evangelisation within our parish and diocesan communities.
4. We will encourage a dynamic and collaborative engagement among all those called through baptism into the family of God to use their gifts and talents to build up the body of Christ in an atmosphere of mutual respect.
5. It is our intention that all families will feel welcome when they enter their church for liturgies, sacramental preparation or support of any kind.
6. Our young people are valued as bringing life to the Church.
7. We commit ourselves to reaching out to all of society, in particular those who feel excluded, offering witness to our belief that each person, made in the image and likeness of God, is deserving of dignity and respect.
8. The structures of the diocese will be renewed to meet the needs of the diverse communities that they serve.
9. We are committed to making our parishes welcoming communities of faith, and to each member of the parish community feeling that they belong and have something to contribute.
10. We understand communication in all its components - the message, the medium and the language - as central to the success of the Church in the modern era. We will seek to actively use communication to promote the Gospel message of peace and reconciliation.

*"The idea of
renewal is exciting.
We need a new
Pentecost."*

- From Parish Consultation



"Jesus did not leave his disciples orphans. He promised to remain with them until the end of time."



3. Prayer Catechesis and Consultation



All together
sharing the
Good News

Our Paisley Diocesan Synod
Eastertide 2016 – June 2017

Our Lady of Paisley; pray for us



Our Synod
Paisley Diocese

Foundations



These foundations were drawn together from Magisterial documents of the Church and formed the basis of our year long Catechesis and Consultation.

It was important that our Diocesan wide consultation was based on the sound and up-to-date mind of the Church.

3. Foundations

3.1. Some Theological Principles Underpinning our Synod

1. The following Foundations provide some theological underpinning of each point of the Charter and assure us that our work is of a piece with the mind of the Church. Beginning from the Second Vatican Council all the Popes of recent times have made evangelisation and the full responsibility of all the baptised - laity as much as clergy and religious – the very heart of their hopes for a renewal of the Church in our times.
2. The Key foundational documents of our Synod are: Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation on the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today's World, *Evangelii Gaudium*, (24th November 2013); The Second Vatican Ecumenical Council: Dogmatic Constitution on The Church, *Lumen Gentium*, (21st November 1964); Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes*, (7th December 1965) and Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church, *Ad Gentes*, (7th December 1965). Then Pope Paul VI's, Apostolic Exhortation on Evangelisation, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, (8th December 1975), Pope John Paul II's, Encyclical Letter on the Permanent Validity of the Church's Missionary Mandate, *Redemptoris Missio* (7th December 1990) and Pope Benedict XVI's, Homily at Mass for the *New Evangelisation* (16th October 2011) and Apostolic Visit to the USA (15th-20th April 2008), *passim*.
3. The topic chosen for our Diocesan Synod is *The New Evangelisation and The Role of our Laity* in this task of our times. It is our firm belief that the most effective way to bring forward the renewal intended by the Council and so dearly awaited in our Church and society will be through the evangelising work of the lay faithful, working together with the clergy, as an integral part of the Body of Christ in the modern circumstances of our times.

“We need a culture among the clergy that is positive about delegation. Even if we cannot get volunteers we should buy in the service so the clergy can do priestly things.”

- From Parish Consultation

3.1.1 What is a Diocesan Synod?

1. Synods have been celebrated in the Church since the early centuries. The word itself comes from a Greek word meaning “to travel together” from which we can understand that synods are points at which the Church in a particular place comes together to celebrate its faith and to determine the road ahead.
2. In Scotland, several synods have been held since the Restoration of the Hierarchy in 1878. For example, the Archdiocese of Glasgow has held four Diocesan Synods. The first three were celebrated by Archbishop Eyre as a follow-up to the Restoration of the Hierarchy. The Fourth Glasgow Synod was celebrated by Archbishop Campbell in 1946 just before the division of the Archdiocese of Glasgow into three dioceses. It was concerned with applying the General Law of the Church, contained in the Code of Canon Law of 1917, to the Archdiocese and with the Archbishop’s desire to divide the large city parishes into smaller units so that priests and people could be closer together. This type of Synod was very different from that envisaged by the new Code of Canon Law of 1983. The 1946 Synod was an exclusively clerical affair and the decrees were published in Latin.
3. In the Diocese of Paisley, we had never celebrated a Diocesan Synod, but we had held three Diocesan Pastoral Congresses to discern our pastoral priorities and to plan for the future provision of pastoral care in our Diocese. In the preparation for these three Congresses the Council of Priests, the Diocesan Pastoral Council and the Diocesan Council of Religious as well as our Parish Pastoral Councils and our Societies and Organisations worked in a parallel process of consultation and were only brought together to hear the Bishop’s conclusions, setting our pastoral priorities.
4. Bishop John took this process a stage further by holding our first Diocesan Synod in order to discern the way ahead for our Diocese. As well as having a pastoral dimension, the Diocesan Synod also has a particular canonical-legal status in the Church.
5. Our Diocesan Synod was intended to bring together the various strands of consultation in the Diocese so that we prayed, reflected and discussed together the way forward, while recognising the unique role of our Bishop to discern, decide and legislate for the way forward.
6. The Code of Canon Law published in 1983 deals with the celebration of diocesan synods.³ However, practical experience has added some insights into the running of Synods. During the Synod of the Diocese of Rome in 1992-3, Pope Saint John Paul II spoke on several occasions about the nature of the Diocesan Synod. This experience resulted in the publication of an *Instruction on Diocesan Synods* in 1997. This Instruction draws together the principles of the Code and the experience of celebrating Diocesan Synods. The *Prologue* of the Instruction notes that many dioceses have celebrated or plan to celebrate assemblies or synods. Because these events are gatherings of the Church they should reflect the nature of the Church as a hierarchical communion in which leadership is exercised as a service to the People of God, and in which the local church is intimately bound up with the universal Church.

3.1.2 The Ecclesiology of Vatican II on the nature and mission of the Church.

1. The Second Vatican Council's distinctive understanding of the nature and mission of the Church is a reflection and embodiment of the following theological and pastoral principles:
2. The Church is, first and foremost, *a mystery or sacrament*, or "a reality imbued with the hidden presence of God."⁴ This principle amends the previous emphasis on the Church as institution and organization⁵ and laid the foundation for the post-conciliar process of renewal and reform.
3. The Church is the whole *People of God*.⁶ This principle amends the previous emphasis on the Church as a hierarchical institution.
4. The whole People of God, laity, religious, and clergy, is called to participate in the mission of Christ as *Prophet, Priest, and King*.⁷ This principle replaces the previous notion wherein the lay apostolate was almost exclusively seen as a participation in the mission of the hierarchy.
5. The mission of the People of God includes *service (diakonia)* to human need in the social, political, and economic orders as well as the preaching of the Word of God and the celebration of the sacraments.⁸ This principle amends the pre-Vatican II notion which regarded such service mainly as a preparation for the preaching of the Gospel but not essential to the Church's mission.
6. The Church so composed and with such a mission, is realised and expressed at the local level as well as the universal level. *The Church is a communion of churches*, structurally expressed in the collegiality of the bishops.⁹ This principle, always emphasized in the Eastern Churches, amends a common pre-Vatican II notion that the Church is, for all practical purposes, always understood as the universal Church, centred on the Vatican under the supreme authority of the Pope, where each diocese is only an administrative division of the universal Church, and each parish, in turn, an administrative subdivision of the diocese.
7. The Catholic Church is *not to be identified solely with the "Roman" Catholic Church*.¹⁰ This principle regards Eastern communities as more than "rites," but as "churches" within the Catholic communion of churches (Greek, Coptic, Maronite, Melkite, Armenian, etc., Catholic Churches). The Church embraces more than the Catholic Church. It is the whole Body of Christ.¹¹ This principle allows us to regard some other Christian communities as part of the Church and not just "related" to but not real members. This is not to say, however, that all churches are equal.
8. The mission of the whole Church includes: the proclamation of the Word of God; the celebration of the sacraments, especially the Eucharist; the witnessing to the Gospel through a life of discipleship; and the rendering of service to those in need, both inside and outside the Church; and for the service aspect of mission.¹²
9. This multiple missionary principle expands upon a narrower view of mission in pre-Vatican II ecclesiology, namely one that tended to restrict the mission to the preaching of the Word and the celebration of the sacraments, and one which paid too little attention to the missionary responsibility of corporate witnessing to the Gospel. Because the Church itself is a sacrament, an essential part of its mission is for it to practice what it preaches.
10. All authority in the Church is to be exercised as a service and in a collegial manner.¹³ This principle is intended to transform the exercise of authority from authoritarian and unilateral to collegial and synodal.
11. Religious truth is also to be found outside the Body of Christ and should be respected wherever it is discovered, and no one is ever to be coerced to embrace either the Christian or the Catholic faith.¹⁴ These principles replace a too narrow understanding of Revelation, of the availability of divine grace and of the universal salvific will.
12. The nature and mission of the Church are always to be understood in relationship and in service to the Kingdom of God¹⁵ because the Church is an eschatological community. This principle replaces the pre-Vatican II ecclesiological misunderstanding that the Church is identical with the Kingdom of God. Rather, the Church is "at the same time holy and always in need of being purified, and incessantly pursues the path of penance and renewal".¹⁶

3.1.3 The New Evangelisation

1. The word 'evangelisation', comes from the Greek and means, 'to announce good news' or 'glad tidings'. In St Mark's Gospel we read: "*After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. 'The time has come,' he said. 'The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!'*"¹⁷
2. The Protestant Tradition tends to use the word 'evangelism', but this usually refers to specific acts of Christian witness. We also have the Protestant Evangelical Churches. The Catholic term 'evangelisation' (used now by some non-Catholics) includes specific acts of witness, but is in fact a much broader concept.
3. Evangelisation is a modern term. Prior to Vatican II the Church spoke of mission. Mission was chiefly seen as something taking place overseas, the bringing of the Gospel to "native peoples". Even in the documents of Vatican II the word 'evangelisation' is not used, but it did come into widespread use shortly afterwards. The Council's Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church¹⁸ spoke of mission as being rooted - not in us and our activity - but in the Blessed Trinity Itself: in the Father's sending of his Son and the sending of the Holy Spirit. The Church was thus seen to be 'by its very nature missionary', and 'in mission' on all continents.
4. In 1974 the World Synod of Bishops discussed the topic of evangelisation and, in his Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation,¹⁹ Blessed Paul VI famously said: "The Church exists in order to evangelise; that is, to preach and teach, to be the channel of the gift of grace".²⁰ In other words evangelisation belongs to the very nature of the Church. The very reason for her existence in history and in cultures is to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ. This mission comes from God, who is himself 'on mission'. So the Church's mission is a sharing in God's Trinitarian mission that is ongoing in every time and every place.
5. The term evangelisation is rich and dense. Its meaning includes many things: It refers to the primary or basic proclamation of the Gospel, the *kerygma*: '*Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again*'; in *Catechesis and apologetics* it refers to the specific preparation for the reception of the Sacraments of Christian Initiation RCIA & RCIC; as *Mystagogia* it means ongoing conversion through the preaching, teaching and deepening formation in the faith throughout a person's Christian life and faith-journey; finally it refers to the living out of the faith in prayer, liturgical worship, and moral life.
6. In 1984, the Secretariat for Non-Christians issued a document entitled '*The Attitude of the Church to Followers of Other Religions*'. It suggests five essential components to evangelisation,²¹ all of which together form a kind of ascending order and unified structure: evangelisation is the living of one's own witness as Christ's disciple, even inadequately; our concrete commitment in the service of the poor and needy in society; our liturgical and contemplative prayer for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit; our entrance into inter-religious dialogue with others "in order to walk together toward truth and to work together in projects of common concern"; and the explicit proclamation of the Person, life, teachings and deeds of Jesus Christ, with the aim of drawing others into that mystery.
7. In other words: evangelisation is everything the Church is and does. This ranges from simply being present and witnessing to a holy life, to explicitly proclaiming Jesus Christ and his Gospel. For the Church evangelisation is not one activity among many; it is the very essence of her nature.
8. During the papacy of Blessed Paul VI, the Church began to reach a deeper and richer awareness of culture. It was seen that, in order to proclaim the Gospel effectively, the Church must understand not only the culture(s) in which she preaches, but also her own culture. To evangelise, we need to 'in-culturate' the Gospel, meaning that we need to express it in terms appropriate to each particular culture. Cardinal Ratzinger was later to describe that task as being the 'inter-culturation' of the Gospel, - a dialogue of cultures, - since the Church herself has a culture and she seeks to create a culture, a Christian culture. This is sometimes called 'contextualisation' or contextual theology.
9. There was a growing concern about the situation of the Church in those countries of ancient Christian origin in the West which were now facing widespread

3. Foundations

de-Christianisation and secularisation with the attendant loss of Catholic faith and practice.

As far back in 1943, Henri Godin and Yves Daniel had published a dramatic book called, *La France, Pays de Mission?* (France, a Mission Country?). By the 1980s it was increasingly evident that, in the whole of Europe, the Church was becoming a minority.

10. These concerns came to the fore during the pontificate of Pope Saint John Paul II. In 1983 he explicitly spoke of the need for a new evangelisation, which he described as being “new in its ardour, new in its methods and new in its expression”. The implication was that the usual or ‘classic’ evangelisation was not working; there was a need for something new. From then on, the term New Evangelisation, as a specific theological term and reality, gained currency and appeared more frequently in documents, especially in preparation for the Jubilee Year, 2000.²²

11. In *Redemptoris Missio*, John Paul II explores three contexts in which the Church finds herself today, and he suggests some routes of evangelisation needed for each:

- (i) Persons and contexts where the Gospel has not yet been announced. What is needed here is primary proclamation, the basic communication of the Gospel.
- (ii) Persons and contexts where the faith is flourishing and vigorous. What is needed is on-going pastoral care of the faithful.
- (iii) Persons in intermediate situations: countries like our own of ancient Christian origin, where people have been baptized, are of good will, are perhaps connected with us through, say, the school, but are either no longer (or maybe not yet) in a real, living relationship with Christ, or have drifted from the practice of faith. What is needed here is New Evangelisation.

Of course, these situations can overlap. “In many of the great cities, for example, a situation requiring *missio ad gentes* can coexist with one which requires new evangelisation... The boundaries between pastoral care of the faithful, new evangelisation and specific missionary activity are not always clearly definable”²³ But essentially, it may be said that New Evangelisation is needed in those situations, contexts

and cultures in which many are baptised but few practice, where people have drifted and lapsed, or have no real, personal and dynamic relationship with Christ and his Church.

12. This is something Pope Benedict XVI developed further. In the year 2000 the then Cardinal Ratzinger in an Address to Catechists said this: “We can see a progressive process of de-Christianisation and a loss of essential human values, which is worrisome. A large part of today’s humanity does not find the Gospel in the usual evangelisation of the Church... This is why we are searching for... a new evangelisation capable of being heard by that world that does not find access to “classic” evangelisation. Everyone needs the Gospel; the Gospel is destined to all and not only to a specific circle and this is why we are obliged to look for new ways of bringing the Gospel to all.” In 2010, Pope Benedict XVI established a Pontifical Council for New Evangelisation. The topic for the 2012 Synod of Bishops was: “The New Evangelisation for the Transmission of the Christian Faith”.

13. The definition of the New Evangelisation is still a bit ‘fluid’. We can say that it is not a programme, as Saint John Paul II himself emphasized: “We are certainly not seduced by the naive expectation that - faced with the great challenges of our time - we shall find some magic formula. No, we shall not be saved by a formula but by a Person, and the assurance which he gives us: ‘I am with you’! “It is not therefore a matter of inventing a “new programme”. The programme already exists: it is the plan found in the Gospel and in the living Tradition, it is the same as ever. Ultimately, it has its centre in Christ himself, who is to be known, loved and imitated, so that in him we may live the life of the Trinity, and with him transform history until its fulfilment in the heavenly Jerusalem... This is a programme which does not change with shifts of times and cultures, even though it takes account of time and culture for the sake of true dialogue and effective communication. This programme for all times is our programme for the Third Millennium. But it must be translated into pastoral initiatives adapted to the circumstances.”²⁴

14. *The New Evangelisation calls for a new ardour.*

Pope Saint John Paul II said we need an evangelisation that is 'new in its ardour, new in its methods and new in its expression'. The New Evangelisation is therefore about every Christian deepening his or her own faith, hope and love and becoming fired up with a new ardour, a real love for Christ and his Church. Filled with this enthusiasm, aware of His personal love for each one of us, our great Good News, we reach out to draw others in.

15. *The New Evangelisation is Christo-centric.*

The New Evangelisation consists of the basic proclamation of the Gospel with teaching and preaching centred on the Person of Christ and on our call to discipleship, to be lived out within the Church.

16. *The New Evangelisation is thoroughly street-conscious.*

We live in a culture focused on design, media image, style and entertainment. This culture is also a secular, pluralist culture which sees no need for religion in any public sphere. In this context it is important for us to be able to articulate what is distinctive about being Catholic, a faith that is utterly ancient and yet thoroughly modern and alternative. We are being invited and challenged to witness in the public domain to Christ and to what makes us different. At the same time we need to make use of the new media resources and available technologies. Our Catholic Tradition is not a chest of old treasures to be kept locked away or constantly paraded as in a living museum, but rather is a tool-box from which things both old and new can be brought out and pressed into service, - as appropriate in different circumstances, - in order to communicate our message, Christ's message, more effectively. These three features - new ardour (discipleship), new method (Christo-centric) and new expression (culturally conscious) - are what characterise the New Evangelisation.

"There is Gospel joy in our midst but sometimes our parishes frown on joy. We need to ask Our Lady for a new Pentecost."

- From Parish Consultation

3.2 The Theological Principles applied to our Situation

Evangelisation:

The Responsibility of the Whole People of God for the Church's Life and Mission

3.2.1. Called through Baptism into the Family of God

1. The goal of our Diocesan Synod was to begin our process of discerning how far and in what ways the lay faithful can be the protagonists of evangelisation. Baptism equips and commissions them to be missionaries. Their vocation is to be out in the world of their families, neighbourhood, work and culture as salt, leaven and light so that their proclamation of the Kingdom of God may transform their part of the world.
2. The Fathers of the Second Vatican Council had a very positive vision of the role of the lay faithful. It cannot be stressed enough that the lay faithful are full members of the Church. This membership is a result of their Baptism, Confirmation and Participation in the Eucharist.
3. Our Catholic faith teaches us that we become members of the Church by Baptism, Confirmation and participation in the Eucharist. Baptism is fundamental and constitutes the shared identity of every Christian. In Baptism we are born again as God's children, who together form Christ's body throughout the world. We also become a Temple of the Holy Spirit.
4. Baptism marks us all with the triple service of Jesus as Priest, Prophet and King. All of us – clergy, religious and laity - share in Christ's priestly service of the sanctification of the world and are called to offer up our lives, our state of life and our work. We are called to witness to Christ by our participation in the Sacred Liturgy and the sacramental life of the Church. We all share His prophetic service of the proclamation of God's Word and we are, all of us, sent out to proclaim the Gospel. In his royal service, we are each challenged to care for each other, to work for justice and peace and to serve the poor after the example of Christ the Kingly Shepherd.
5. The fundamental vocation in which we all share, clergy, religious and lay faithful, is the vocation to holiness. It is the vocation of every Catholic and the recognition of that vocation by and in each of us is the first step toward the renewal of our diocese. This renewal will be accomplished through the empowerment of the lay faithful in the work of evangelization.
6. Within the Church, the lay faithful, in collaboration with their Priests and Bishop share in responsibility for the day-to-day running of their parishes and diocese, particularly in the areas of fabric, finance and administration. This should free up the clergy to give more attention to prayer, the preaching of the Word, the celebration of the Liturgy and Sacraments, and the pastoral leadership of the whole people in the charity which keeps us one and helps us grow as Christ's Body.
7. The lay faithful have their own "proper" role which is their vocation to engage the secular world and matters of ordinary life in the world. The Holy Spirit gives them a certain genius in worldly things. He gives them a bold spirit which encourages them to be spiritual adventurers and to take the initiative in bringing ordinary and everyday things to God. Their world is good because God created it and He has handed it over to them to be partners with Him in enriching it and incorporating it into the Kingdom of God.
8. At the heart of all efforts at evangelisation is a personal encounter with God and a spiritual renewal based on our baptismal call which transforms us into God's children. It is an encounter with a Person which gives us a new horizon and a decisive direction. Our faith is no longer compartmentalised but, instead, God's love is so compelling that our only response is to offer Him all of our life for the rest of our life.

Two consequences follow from this response to God's love. The first is that our eyes are opened to our brothers and sisters in Christ. The second is that we receive and understand our vocation in this life. This grace is not restricted to a certain group of "holy people" in the Church whether it be priests, religious or lay orders.

9. The results of this encounter with God are, firstly, that community is formed and, secondly, that mission is set in motion. Members of the Church achieve what, humanly speaking, could not be achieved because they gain supernatural strength and help from the presence of the Holy Spirit working in and through them: the young teenager seeks faith-based company and in that group shares, explores and witnesses to their faith; the married couple pray and seek God's will for their relationship and role as parents. They desire the fellowship of other couples who similarly desire to grow in understanding of God's plan for their marriage and family life; head teachers and teachers approach their task with new enthusiasm and insight. They are given inspiration to work together to create faith-based communities in their schools; priests and religious are renewed interiorly and find support through brother priests and faith-filled laity; and so on with the other professions, trades and services.

10. The history of our faith reminds us that it is the saints who renew the Church. Our lay faithful are called to be holy in the world by living their lives in Christian charity. Lay people are called to find holiness precisely in living out "ordinary life": in marriage, family, single life or widowhood; in employment, socialising and health. In all this the lay faithful use the talents life offers and the gifts the Holy Spirit gives them to be holy and make the world holy.

11. We chose deliberately to convoke our Synod on the Feast of St. Margaret. St. Margaret was herself a member of the lay faithful and her passionate and thoughtful dedication to Christ brought about a great reform of the Church and lasting renewal of the Gospel in Scotland. Already as a young woman, Margaret began the regeneration of the Faith by committing herself to the care of the poor, the education of the young, the beauty of the liturgy and the welcoming of new religious communities

to our country. St. Margaret is a fine example and inspiration to us of what God can achieve through the lay faithful. Along with St. Mirin, our diocesan patron, we made St. Margaret a co-patron of our Synod, which we place, above all, under the guidance, protection and intercession of that laywoman most blessed of all the lay faithful, Our Lady of Paisley.

12. Pope Francis wants a renewal which will transform Church-going Catholics into spirit-filled evangelisers who have experienced the joy of knowing Jesus and want to pass on His life to others. As a Diocese, we want to respond seriously to the Pope's invitation and challenge.

*"Lay men
should not
be overlooked."*

3.2.2. Discipleship and Formation

1. In writing about the Catechism of the Catholic Church Pope Benedict taught us that evangelisation is built on the good formation of our laity. Pope Francis reminds us how evangelisation is at first a simple proclamation about Jesus and His salvation.
2. Our message is attractive: that God so loved the world, that He sent his Son, Jesus, who lived and died and rose again for everyone and that He is the Way, Truth and Life. We know that Jesus is the only answer to the hopes and fears of the world and our evangelisation is a service, person to person, that cries out: 'Throw open the doors to Christ!' We seek to proclaim the Gospel to the lost but it does not stop there. That first word matures and blossoms into catechesis that helps Catholics to know what they believe and why they believe it and to explain it to others confidently, which Saint John Paul II says has now become more urgent and necessary than ever. It flowers into genuine personal engagement in the Mass and the Sacraments. It shows itself in the way we live our moral life, not by rules we do not understand but, as Pope Benedict pointed out, by a vision we endorse and love. As he said, being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea but is the encounter with an Event, a Person, who gives life a new horizon. Our faith involves the laity taking up apostolates in order to reach out into the world to make the world a place of justice, peace and mercy.
3. Recent teachings of the Church have sketched out how the new evangelisation requires us to have a much better-formed laity and suggests that their ongoing formation become a diocesan priority in order to help them discover and grow in their vocation and in their desire to live it. Awareness of the personal vocation and mission of each member of the Church is what gives us our sense of dignity and personal responsibility for the Church: listening to God's Word, constant prayer, wise spiritual direction, discernment of our gifts and a good grasp of our lives and times help us to uncover God's will for our lives and how to not simply know what God wants but actually do it; ongoing formation makes mature members of the Church and citizens of society because it aims at unity between our Christian faith and our worldly lives. Spiritual formation helps us discern our calling. Catechetical and doctrinal formation shows us how to explain our faith to our peers, and human formation helps us to be virtuous and respected citizens.
4. The Church has long taught how our family homes are our natural schools of formation in faith and so these domestic churches will always be crucial to the Church's mission. Families are more fundamental than schools and this means rethinking our vision of Catholic schools to make them more inclusive of the whole Church. Recent Synods of Bishops have encouraged us to think about establishing formation communities of parents, teachers, clergy and youth. Our Clergy, religious and lay people are to be present and active in our schools, offering students an attractive image of the Church and its richness, and teachers are to be witnesses in their example of good and holy lives. All this needs appropriate training to ensure the widespread and ongoing formation of us all.
5. Our Popes have never missed the opportunity to emphasise how all of us are called to the work of evangelisation - priests, preachers, teachers, catechists, witnesses and friends - but each according to our proper role and gifts. This work takes place in a variety of contexts: at home, in the parish, the pub, the school, and the workplace. All of us need encouragement and support in discerning our role and carrying out our task. Everyone will benefit from formation in the faith and in training for the role appointed to them.
6. Pope Francis has constantly reminded us how too few in our Church family have been left to do the "heavy lifting". Up until now we have relied on a small number of pastoral workers, mostly priests, deacons, religious sisters and lay professionals like teachers. Their contribution has been enormous and we should have tremendous gratitude for them. But, being human, they have suffered from the upheavals in the world and the Church and they need to be given space for ongoing formation and renewal so that they can share a sense of the new grace being given to the Church and take up reinvigorated missionary discipleship. A rediscovery of their confidence and fervour will inspire them to engage with the world afresh, creating new opportunities for encounters with people, living only for God, for the poor and the lost, and with new-found hope of winning people to Christ and so of transforming our society.

7. Pope Francis also reminded us of the fact that the laity make up the vast majority of the Church and he directed us that they must now be formed to take up real personal responsibility in our Church. This includes bringing women and young people into the heart of decision-making. The Church now envisages the role of the laity as much more than just helping around the parish. Our lay people are called to be sent out in the forefront of our mission in the world as its leaven, salt and light. Getting involved in our culture, politics and economics, they are to take the lead in bringing Christian values into the heart of society to transform it into the Kingdom of God.

So, an urgent call is being put out to all the baptised to take on a full, active role in the Gospel's outreach and no longer leave it all to the "professionals" to evangelise society. Formation of the laity is necessary but Pope Francis reminds us that no-one needs much training to share the Good News that God loves us, died to save us, is risen and is living among each and every one of us to help and strengthen us. The simpler and more personal we keep the Gospel the more powerful, attractive, inclusive and welcoming it is and Christians know its power when it is offered in a kind and encouraging way.

"There needs to be a diagnosis to see why things are broken and why people feel excluded and how we can get the message of truth in love."

- From Parish Consultation

3.2.3. Christian Community and Communion

1. The Fathers of the Second Vatican Council thought that the laity had become too passive or secondary as members in the Church, not much more than the 'long arm' of the clergy. They had not been afforded their own proper dignity, vocation and responsibility. The Council affirmed that the laity were as much responsible for the Church's mission as the clergy. All things temporal properly belong to their vocation, gifts and genius. This involves them in the running of the parish and in its mission in the local area. Part of the role of the laity is to take care of the temporalities of the Church so that the clergy can be freed up to concentrate on being spiritual shepherds of the community and building up the Church and the locality by a life of prayer, preaching of the Word, and service of the Sacraments.
2. The Council Fathers re-proposed the truth that the Church is the whole People of God where clergy and faithful are full and equal members. Our hierarchical authority is designed to serve the building up of the whole community as one family in praise of God and as a missionary force in the world, especially among the forgotten ones. The Church is the Body of Christ of which Christ is the Head and we are the members. So the Church is the Risen Christ, living in the world as its Saviour through His Body, the Church. This is most apparent when we gather at Mass to listen to His Word and carry on the work of His Redemption until He comes again. But Jesus wants to reach out to every place and person in the world and He can do so only through our hands, feet, eyes and hearts. The Church is the Temple of the Holy Spirit. Despite our sins and scandals, we will always be a Holy Community because we are the plan of Our Heavenly Father, we have Christ as Our Head, the Holy Spirit is ever dwelling among us and our members include the All Holy Mother of God together with the angels and saints.
3. Pope Francis has enlightened us to the reality that the faith-filled community evangelises simply by the fact that it exists. Relationships founded on a living faith are always inclusive and always fruitful. Living faith makes the Liturgy, the Eucharist and the Sacraments come alive in a new way. Worship by faith-filled Catholics is always transformational.
4. Through a renewed awareness that we are part of a real family and the powerful witness of public worship, we answer the Holy Father's call to form welcoming communities in which all outcasts find a home and concrete experiences of communion. Such loving welcome attracts the glance of our contemporary, disenchanted humanity with the ardent force of charity: *See how they love one another!* Renewal in personal faith leads to communities renewed in faith and it is this witness that draws people to Christ. Evangelisation is for no-one an individual isolated act. It is one carried out together with the whole People of God.
5. The Vatican Council teaches that the Church is a "communion" or, simply put, a family, and being laity means being a responsible family member. God saved us as a family of people, not as individuals, and He gave each of us different gifts to serve the common good of all.
6. Pope John Paul II reminded us that lay gifts are, first of all, for exercise out in the world to make the outside world holy and in this way they build up the Church as an ever-growing community. The laity serve the world in many ways: they uphold the inviolable dignity of every person in apostolates for life, conscience, freedom of religion, marriage and family life and in works of charity to the poor, sick and needy; they are active in civic life and politics, arguing for liberties, justice, solidarity and the common good, for simplicity of life and preference for the poor; in economics they put people and their right to work over markets; in arts, education, entertainment and media they are creative and courageous in harmonising popular culture with Gospel values.
7. But the laity should also see everything they do in their lives as about helping to build up the Church and so they try to leave some space for active involvement in the parish and diocese, in so far as family, work and life commitments allow. In the local Church administration is carried on by laity who work shoulder to shoulder with their clergy in collaborative ministry in the parish and diocese, in pastoral councils, or by getting involved in parish apostolates, or sometimes by forming small communities.

8. All apostolate begins in the heart of each person who feels an urge to be involved more deeply, continually and effectively in the Church but in order to do this the lay faithful realise they have to join Catholic groups. Good groups work well when they witness to their shared communion and have a plan for how they can be holy, faith-filled, fraternal, and apostolic in society.
9. In *Christifideles Laici* Pope John Paul reminded us that any new evangelisation has to pay special attention to our young people. As they form approximately half of the world's population, they have exceptional potential. No doubt they present a real challenge for the Church but they remain our hope for the future. They should be given a lead role in all our efforts to renew our society. They value justice and peace, friendship and solidarity and the environment but they are troubled by many anxieties, disillusionments and temptations. We need to have that special love for them that Jesus had and learn to talk with them in friendly and courageous dialogue.
10. Popes John Paul, Benedict and Francis have emphasised how women are to be given prominence in the life and mission of our parishes and dioceses and in any consultation and decision-making. They are gifted in knowing how to pass on the faith, in their witness to marriage and parenting, in protecting life, and holding our culture to high moral standards. Our men cannot leave it all to them when it comes to worship, catechesis and good works but should work alongside them pastorally. Recent guidance of the Church hopes that spouses will act, not alone, but as couples, and together, with their families, in their service of the Church and world.
11. *Christifideles Laici* draws to our attention how older people have new opportunities for apostolate. No-one retires from the Church but finds new ways for involvement and growth. The Church, in fact, is grateful to her senior members for what they have contributed to her over the years and because their faith and practice form the basis which the Church of this generation builds upon in order to strengthen its present days and fortify its future. Their wisdom and experience offer sound advice to the bishop and clergy about how to work on foundations they already laid. The Church encourages her young people to meet with her elderly in order to hear for themselves the perspectives of the mature members of our community. In this way two very important groups cooperate in mutual respect. Our housebound and sick people, too, are evangelisers, even if weary or troubled. In fact those who are weak are our greatest strength. They live out their vocation more than ever uniting their sufferings to Christ for the good of the Church and sharing their newfound experience of the joy of the Risen Christ even in their troubles.
12. We are all part of families with an extended group of friends and acquaintances but together we form Christ's faithful people and only together can we bring souls to Christ and His Church. The Church exhorts everyone to join hands in this honourable endeavour and look for ways to build each other up by words and actions. We have to protect our unity by speaking positively about the Church and one another and keep encouraging one another in our efforts to evangelise.

3.2.4. Mission and Evangelisation

1. The Holy Spirit calls not just for re-evangelisation but for a new evangelisation. The term, “new evangelisation”, was first used by Pope Saint John Paul II in 1983 and he gave a basic definition of what it meant.
2. It is new (i) in its passion, (ii) in its expression (iii) in its methods. We have to find new energy and new love, a new style and language for today’s world and we have to use new media and all the opportunities of new technologies. Evangelisation cannot be bolted onto the list of diocesan and parish activities. If evangelisation is part of the fundamental identity of the Church then any new ideas about it inevitably change our current idea of what Church is. The new evangelisation has a number of characteristics.
3. *The new evangelisation calls for the participation of every Christian.* The task of spreading the faith falls on every disciple of Christ, according to his or her ability. The Lord entrusts this mission equally to the lay faithful, religious and clergy. The clergy are certainly essential to new evangelisation. Pope Francis says bishops are the pillars on which it rests and priests and deacons have the task of awakening missionary awareness in all the faithful. But he goes on to show how the laity can assume their full responsibility as leaders in the Church’s mission by transforming their daily lives to become convincing witness of the Gospel in the world as its salt, leaven and light. Pope John Paul reinforced this point: everyone without exception has to bear fruit. Woe to me, said St Paul, if I do not preach the Gospel. Jesus reminds us that any authentic communion with Him proves itself by bringing new branches to flower.
4. *The new evangelisation is different from foreign missions:* In the past, because Europe was Christian, the Church’s life at home was about pastoral care of believers. Recently, however, the Church has begun to realise that many Catholics at home have been “sacramentalised” but without ever being evangelised to have their own personal commitment to Jesus and His Gospel. The effect is that too many Catholics are baptised and even receive First Sacraments and yet never seem to have met Jesus as a real Person. Research shows that most Catholics who leave the Church for evangelical congregations say it is because they want a real, personal encounter with Jesus that they do not find in the Catholic Church or that they feel lacking when they come to Mass. So before we evangelise others we need a new evangelisation ourselves. Older Catholics need re-evangelising and new Catholics need primary evangelisation.
5. *The new evangelisation is personal:* Although bringing someone to Christ is essentially an act of the whole Church, having a missionary perspective is for each of us a personal responsibility. Pope Francis points out how we need to rediscover the ways Jesus approached people and called them and put these approaches into practice in today’s circumstances. Travelling beside friends, family, guests, co-workers and Catholic sisters and brothers, as Jesus accompanied the disciples on the road to Emmaus, in their homes and at work, during special occasions and through their trials and difficulties, is the best way to evangelise.
6. *The new evangelisation is directed to cultures:* One of the fresh insights of the Second Vatican Council was that the Gospel does not just ask us to save souls but to evangelise whole cultures. Cultures need to be regenerated by contact with the Gospel. God has a vision not just for you and me but for Scotland, for Britain, for Europe. He has a vision for a Christian media, for an economic, political and academic culture. Wherever a culture is hostile to faith the faith cannot be fully expressed in it but it is also just as true to say that the culture itself cannot really flourish and be all it can be without the light of faith.
7. *The new evangelisation is ecumenical:* It imagines Catholics, Protestants and Evangelicals working together in the world, passing on the central Christian message.
8. *The new evangelisation has a preferential option for the poor:* Pope Francis wants a Church which is poor and for the poor. Just as Jesus was poor, born into a poor family, was sent to bring the Good News to the poor and was a friend of all the dispossessed, we have to become poor and go to find Christ amidst the marginalised, the destitute and the excluded. The Gospel is about love and if we do not show this to the poorest then no-one will understand who we are. It means tending to their needs, working for their development and being the voice of the excluded in our world.

9. *The new evangelisation summons the Church to be evangelised Herself:* The Church exists to evangelise and go out into the world, sharing the Good News with everyone. Evangelisation prioritises those who do not know Jesus, as well as the spiritually sick who have fallen down and the lost who cannot find a way back. But, in order to become a Church that reaches out, evangelisation summons the Church itself to conversion by calling us to reshape the way we live as a Church. As Pope Francis says, the call to evangelisation challenges us to be less a Church of administration focusing on liturgies and initiatives that feed only ourselves and appearing to be a closed community of the privileged to those who are not one of us. It calls the Church to change and, in going out on mission, to rediscover the joy of the Gospel.
10. *The new evangelisation has the Holy Spirit as its Agent:* The Scriptures teach us that the Holy Spirit is the true agent of evangelisation. We cannot force people to come to Christ and our diocese cannot really plan the work of the Holy Spirit. *The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.* Pope Paul VI tells us that it is the Holy Spirit who impels each individual to proclaim the Gospel and it is He who, in the depths of consciences, causes the Word of salvation to be accepted and understood. Techniques of evangelisation are good but even the most advanced ones cannot replace the gentle action of the Spirit. The work of our Synod is to support and encourage the work that the Holy Spirit is already doing among us in the diocese and to fan into a flame the gifts that every member of Christ's faithful has already received at baptism. This action of the Holy Spirit is always preceded by waiting and prayer which is why we join with Mary, the Mother of Jesus, and the Apostles in the upper room in anticipation of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, Who alone can lead us forward in the work of evangelisation and the renewal of our Church
11. It is a certainty that faith is strengthened when it is given to others, both the faith of individual Catholics themselves and the faith of the Catholic Church as a whole. For many reasons, we need a Catholic evangelisation, a new outward direction to all we do.
12. In the U.S.A., the Catholic Church set itself three goals in its focus on evangelisation: firstly to bring about such enthusiasm for the faith in all Catholics that, in living their faith in Jesus, they would automatically share it with others; secondly to invite all peoples of all backgrounds to hear the message of salvation in Jesus so as to find Him fully in the Church; and finally to foster Gospel values in the wider culture in terms of the dignity of the person, the importance of family and concern for the common good of society so as to transform the whole nation by the power of Christ.
13. Pope Francis has said that the present state of the world absolutely demands a new evangelisation involving all of us. Three centuries of steady de-Christianisation and secularisation of Europe have seen the Church lose much of its cultural influence. For today's generation faith is less about being born into some religious institution and more about personal decisions made one by one. So, to win people back to Christ, we have to rediscover how to reach out and proclaim Jesus and the Gospel again to every person as a joyful and welcoming message, just as the early Church did in New Testament times and for the early part of her history, without much help from the State or current fashions and trends.
14. Pope John Paul said we now have to take an historic leap forward in our missionary outreach and try to bring humanity back to communion with itself and God. But that is liberating and exciting. Now we can begin!
15. Living out the Christian life as a witness - by faith, worship and example in community - is the authentic foundation for any work of evangelisation. But something more is required.
16. Faith comes from what is heard and Pope Paul VI reminds us that there is no evangelisation without the explicit proclamation of Jesus as the Lord. Preaching the kerygma, that is, the basic Gospel message - that through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus we have the forgiveness of our sins and the promise of new life with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit - is done by telling people about Jesus and by our personal witness of our own encounter and experience of the Risen Lord.

3.2.5. Some current obstacles to evangelisation

17. The Church advises us that before we can move forward in the task of new evangelisation we have to recognise some obstacles in our path to becoming a missionary Church. We must not be defeated by them but confront them, solve them, and move on. We ask the Holy Spirit to guide us through this rough terrain so that we can set out confidently on the highways and byways of evangelisation. Recent Synods of Bishops dealing with evangelisation have pointed out some current obstacles to evangelisation:
18. **Language:** The language of evangelisation is unfamiliar to us Catholics. It does not sound Catholic and we wonder if, at the end of all this effort to become a truly evangelical Church, we will be leaving behind the Catholic Church we know and love and are at home in. The language of evangelisation has a Protestant or fundamentalist ring.
19. **Embarrassment:** Talk of going out into the world on a mission has a ring of triumphalism about it, even of denial. Who are we, who have been exposed to so much scandal, to tell others the way to live their lives when it can be pointed out that we have not lived up to those same standards ourselves?
20. **Changing times:** We live in a world that has changed irreversibly from the old days of Catholic mission. People are more sophisticated and society has agreed that religion is a private matter of personal choice that has to be respected and left alone. In fact, our Western culture throws up a number of obstacles to faith. The challenges raised in our diocese are by no means uncommon to the Catholic Church in the West. The dramatic cultural changes in modern society have afforded humanity undeniable benefits but have also led to a general weakening of faith in Christian communities in the West. There has been a loss of the sense of sacred with the rise of secular humanism which has no room for a transcendent reality. Materialism and consumerism have distracted people's minds and hearts. All this has undermined faith in a provident and loving God who meets our human and spiritual needs. Our society sees less convincingly the need for a Saviour who frees us from our sins and calls us into loving fellowship with Him and one another. Catholic culture in the West has been eroded by the prevalent worldview where there is no room for God. Pope John Paul believed that special evangelisation is needed most in the West, so prone to secularism, atheism or even religious indifferentism among Catholics. Only a missionary Church can face up to and solve Western problems with new faith and new freedom from its worldly forces.
21. Many practicing Catholics see membership of the Church as similar to *belonging to a spiritual club* that exists for the personal benefit of its members. They see it as about getting themselves to Heaven and saving their own souls rather than reaching out to others. Yet Jesus said He did not come to save Himself but the lost and so should His disciples. It remains the case that we see the power of the Holy Spirit at its strongest only in a Church that goes out to bring the Good News to others. The miracles of the Holy Spirit are more apparent in the evangelisation of unbelievers than in the pastoral care of believers. Nor does the Church know any joy greater than the joy of the return of the lost.

3.2.6. Evangelisation does matter.

22. In the final analysis, of course, we must answer one basic question before anything else is possible: why does evangelisation matter? If we believe that everyone finds their own path to Heaven and, in the end, no-one really goes to Hell, why bother? Yet, today, among practising Catholics the absence of a basic idea of how they are saved is striking. In a survey that asked, “If you die tonight why should you go to heaven?”, most Catholics did not have a clue. Hardly any even mentioned Jesus. When there is such confusion everywhere about the basics of our Catholic faith how will we ever have the necessary clarity and energy to go out, side by side, and preach, effectively and with conviction, the salvation Jesus brings?

23. Blessed Paul VI said that the Church is missionary or She is nothing! Pope John Paul repeated often that to evangelise is our most profound identity. In resolving to be a Church of evangelisation we are following the will of the Holy Spirit for the Catholic Church in these new times.

24. Saint John Paul declared: “The moment has come to commit all the Church’s energies to a new evangelisation and mission to the world. He went on: No believer in Christ, no institution of the Church can avoid this supreme duty to proclaim Christ to all peoples”. In saying this he was cementing a shift to evangelisation begun by Blessed Paul VI which is one of the most dramatic developments in modern Catholicism.

25. Following the Second Vatican Council Pope Paul VI dedicated his entire pontificate to evangelisation. He chose the name Paul to indicate that he wished to follow the example of Saint Paul, the “Apostle to the gentiles”. In his letter to the Church on the theme of Evangelisation, *Evangelii nuntiandi*, of 1975, he wrote that the Church exists to evangelise and he went on to say how evangelisation is our very identity and vocation. He concluded that the first grace God gives to the Church is this one and added that there is no evangelisation unless we explicitly proclaim that Jesus is the Lord. From now we can take the new evangelisation to be the will of the Holy Spirit for our times and the principal path of renewal for the Church.

“We have to be open to rejection but not take it personally and just keep on loving. .”
- From Parish Consultation

Consultations

"This section gathers up feedback from the Consultation around Parishes and People. All of this was accompanied by prayer in the Pilgrimage of the Icon and of Our Lady of Paisley."

Parish and People Feedback

Prayer

Our diocese of Paisley has embarked upon the journey of a Synod which will take place in Easter 2016. In reality the Synod has already begun since its convocation by me at Holy Mass on the Feast of Saint Margaret in Saint Mirin's cathedral. The weeks and months that follow will see us establishing all the structures and instruments required by Canon Law for the process. They will also be full of diocesan-wide prayer, consultation and discussion, Catechesis and discernment, so that by the time the Synod gathers, all those who will represent us will be filled with the grace of God and aware of the minds and hearts of our people.

We have placed our Synod under the patronage of Our Lady of Paisley and the co-patronage of Saints Mirin and Margaret.

Before the Reformation Our Lady of Paisley was known throughout Scotland, and the faithful, from kings to commoners, made the pilgrimage to seek her intercession. When the true faith was sundered She and Her memory were lost, but not Her protection or Her promise of hope. The convocation of our Synod has also brought about a rebirth in devotion to our own diocesan Mother. Please God these days of Her glad re-appearing will be a token to us of the return of the grace of God to our land and of the true faith in Christ to His people.

Parish Consultation

New Pentecost:

The idea of renewal is exciting. We need a new Pentecost. Our Pentecostal brethren are strong and we can learn from them. Unless we are spirit-filled we cannot pass on the Gospel. The gifts of prophecy, signs and wonders have been suppressed by the Church. That is why the young do not come. There is Gospel joy in our midst but sometimes our parishes frown on joy. We need to ask Our Lady for a new Pentecost.

Discernment:

There needs to be a diagnosis to see why things are broken and why people feel excluded and how we can get the message of truth in love. There should be a census to see where everyone lives. Get names and addresses to know where they are and send others to see them.

Holy Church:

We have to be the best we can be before we will attract others. Evangelisation needs strength. We need a retreat centre in the diocese. We have the Eucharist. Reverence for the Eucharist needs to grow. We can't have the mentality that we're Catholics and we're it. We somehow feel we're the elect and others are useless. We need to overcome this on a spiritual and practical level.

Evangelisation:

Mission needs collectiveness and warmth. See the universities who encourage students to do worthwhile mission. We went as a family to the university chaplaincy. Evangelisation doesn't need theology. We just need to know Christ. It is about talking about Jesus to others. It needs a personal change of heart to say I want to be a spirit-filled evangeliser. We have to be open to rejection but not take it personally and just keep on loving. We have to be very happy and joyful in our faith. A smile passes on a message. It seems exciting. We need a new skills set for evangelisation to happen. What do you say when you go to a door? It is not about theological skills but about communication skills.

Pope Francis prefers the model of the Church as a field hospital rather than a fortress. The fortress Church is definitely a temptation. The idea of a culture war between the Church and secularism reinforces this. So a tension will emerge between field hospital and fortress models

and we need to predict how they will be manifest and managed. All will agree the principles but the tensions will be in the practicalities and statements of intention. If there is a culture war how much is the Holy Spirit in the culture or against it? We need a new, more correct way of seeing the world as well as of seeing the Church.

The Parish:

We should celebrate the gifts people have in the parish and build a vision together for the parish. We are still stuck in the Parish/Mass model. But Our Lady went out to visit Elizabeth in order to be with someone else. How can we be with one another and with those outside? How can we discover the goodness of conversation and talking with each other? Some people deny the need to go to your own parish but what happens to a community when its own parishioners don't go? Many Catholics are nomads who go to get their card stamped somewhere but they don't belong. Nomads and competition among priests to get bigger attendances is horrible. Even priests see their parishes as single entities but we belong to our deaneries and diocese. Even Mass times come into this mentality. A lot of work needs to be done to create a less Congregationalist model. We are better together. The congregation is the basis of the church. How many basic Catholics get involved more? We are too complacent. This is the basics of evangelisation. We have to show what we are doing for our own church. Fr N organised walks and pilgrimages as a parish community. It is the only parish outwith universities that has this. We want an evangelical style of church and small groups. Parishes are isolationist. We sit in our own cocoons. We need more integration.

Welcoming community:

Sometimes there is a coldness. Do we welcome newcomers? Do we speak to strangers who come to the church, coming out of our comfort zone. We can learn from other denominations how to be welcoming. We can learn fellowship from them. How can we evangelise outside when we do not even talk to each other in the church? There is still snobbery in the church.

Healing:

We need healing. At the *Little Way Healing* hundreds come forward from all ages and stages because we are all broken and hurting. Our pews are full of broken, hurting people. We know this in our heads even if we doubt it in our hearts. So we need more healing events in the diocese. Healing is part of evangelisation.

Children and Young:

We need to bring the young into our renewal. Children's Masses fill our churches when we have them. This is a plea from a grandmother that we include them. Our young people are being lost to reformed communities but they are happy there and their love of Jesus grows. We need to do more for our young people. Monthly events are not enough. They need to be weekly. Young should be included in everything because we are losing them. Attitudes can put the young off. They are put off when they see or hear judgemental attitudes. For example, remarking about how those who come to christenings are dressed. So there is a judgementalism from the laity too. Children and young know very little of their faith and about the sacraments. For many their first Holy Communion was their last. Maybe we need refresher courses in schools on the basics of the faith because it is basically simple. We could have refresher courses for the faithful at life changes. The young should be cast in a more positive light. The vast majority are an inspiration on community service. What chimes with them is faith in action. They are willing and capable of leadership. The Church must have more for young people to help them put their faith into action. The attendance of young people at Mass has nose-dived in some parishes. They need to be brought together to create a community of youth that would give them confidence to evangelise. Young people like big events. How about an ecumenical *Praise in the Park*? We should have plans to get into schools and ask why they are not interested. We had chaplains at school but after this there was a void. There is no opportunity just to talk to a priest. Can there be post school chaplains (*applause*). The young are not encouraged enough to be part of the Church now (*applause*). The youth are a matter of urgency. Everything has been exclusive of the poor and the young. There used to be a fantastic youth programme. The ground initiatives got no support from the top. There are some young people in the Church but they are struggling without support. (*big applause*). As a young person I am really encouraged by this forward-thinking approach of innovation. But I can understand the issues other are raising. We all have to look forward progressively. We cannot worry about the past but must now make the diocese better. This may be uncomfortable but remember the aim, a better, stronger diocese. (*biggest applause*). We need better publicity of our youth events. The age range for the youth events is too wide (12-25) (*big applause*).

We do not see the young ones again after Holy Communion so we need to evangelise them. We need to listen to the perspective of the young. Evangelical churches set up creative ways to bring Christ alive for children. We can learn from them. The first sacraments need to become opportunities rather than causes of disillusion. Priests/parishes should visit the homes of first communicants and listen to their hurts and wounds and then it enhances our celebration of First Communion. These families want to meet the priest and see they are normal. We have to tell them God loves them. It's an encounter. Visits are better than meetings.

Schools-education:

How will we maintain our presence in schools since these are the first place of evangelisation but sometimes priests cannot be found to go in?

Primary School. These are the places of First Sacraments and at this age children are naturally holy and spiritual and accept everything with true faith. But they are not taken to Mass by their parents. What can be done to get to parents from the school? This is becoming more difficult as families become more irregular. The journey stops quickly beyond the school gates. School makes faith easy for young Catholics but it is difficult for them outside school. Get staff from primary involved. Maybe get volunteers, class assistants, to coordinate parish-school link, possibly specialised in RE because teachers themselves do not always know their faith. We need to get our youth involved through advertising to them through schools. We have to get into the schools with an intention to evangelise instead of waiting for kids to come to Mass and parish. There is no chaplain in St Columba's. Without chaplains the local priests are just doing a favour to the schools and the attendance of the young is optional not curricular. This is a big challenge. With fewer priests we need to be pragmatic but with pastoral ministry to schools we cannot throw the baby out with the bath water (applause). There is the 'secondary school dip'. The concerns of the young are often the same as the concerns of the older generation. Maybe we could have buddying of old and young.

Priests:

Priests must allow parishioners to help. Some priests are good at reaching out to the poor and do a lot. Do clergy take parishioners for granted? How seriously do they take us? Do they treat their parishioners as equals?

Are they patronising to us? There is a problem of the age of the clergy. St Mungo's had to close. It was the first time the lay faithful had to watch a parish close. They believe the bishop will have to come back again and announce closures and mergers. The laity does not believe the bishop's assurances against closures. (applause). Can we not get priests from outside to stop parish closures. Priests need refreshment and to be looked after. Can the laity support their Priest to make his life more joyful, e.g. doing parish administration? (applause). Priests should stick to priestly things so that their time is used for their pastoral work. We need a culture among the clergy that is positive about delegation. Even if we cannot get volunteers we should buy in the service so they can do priestly things. (applause). We see burnout across the board with the priests. They don't get brother-to-brother support. Daily Prayer is the support of the priests. They need to pray. It comes from their daily commitment to Christ. As priests we have to look at ourselves and ask what is blocking the joy of the Gospel in us it is scary but it is exhilarating. I want to be part of it, like the first disciples who were sent. I want the Visitation joy. Priests do not share the same pastoral burdens. Some are so pressed that they need refreshment. Sometimes there is natural burnout. It is easy to fall into another lifestyle. But we need spiritual direction, support groups etc.

Religious:

Sr. N clearly loves Jesus. The people she worked with sang and were happy.

Teachers:

We have a problem of losing out Catholic teachers to the non-denominational sector.

Lay involvement:

RCIA is the laity working in action. This model can be extended. Maybe old Catholics can come to RCIA. Some people are shy, not lazy, so ask them. Everyone can do just a little thing. Deep rooted issues and anxieties have not been answered to the satisfaction of the lay faithful (applause). The social capacity of the Church is massive and untapped but we are presently cafeteria Catholics. We need an inventory of our gifts. We feel as if we needed permission to exercise these. Do we need wholesale re-education of the laity?

Middle aged:

Thirties to Fifties generation need Catechesis.
Could we have bulletin Catechesis?

Elderly/Sick:

99% of sick and housebound Catholics do not see a priest or receive Holy Communion. They are the real poor, marginalised and isolated. They pray continually but without the consolation of the Sacraments. Old people who come to Mass then stop coming through age etc and no one notices they are missing or comes to see them. We should inform the priest if someone is missing. The sick are a great source of evangelisation. Could there be a place for the Blessed Sacrament for them? We need a pastoral ministry for the disabled, eg the deaf and have appropriate hymn books. Maybe a chaplain for the disabled?

Immigrants:

We should open our hands and hearts to welcome immigrants. Our culture and shyness holds us back. Talk to new people and break down barriers.

Scriptures:

The Scriptures are the living Word of God. But tradition in the Church will be a huge obstacle to its living power in the Church. We can learn from Pentecostal services which are different every week. The young find Mass boring. We need to find different ways of celebrating it in order to convert them. Explain the meaning of the Word of God. If the faithful could understand the Scriptures it would change our lives. We want to see how the Word of God applies to our lives. This gives us a relationship to God and changes hearts. Maybe we could have Scriptural groups with our priests so they are in touch with our lives and concerns.

Marriage and Families:

We must encourage families to come to church together. Many are frightened to come with young children because they are noisy but a crèche is not part of the Mass. Parishes need to be welcoming to children. We should encourage people to spend less money on expensive weddings and be simple. Evangelisation starts with families. Today they are the real poor. Parents will go anywhere to see their children involved. So get kids involved in Mass with readings, hymns. Parents need to be involved on the new evangelisation. They need to know how to pray with their children

and pass on a personal relationship with God to them. Schools are a blessing and a danger. The home is a key part in evangelisation. It is as important as the parish and diocese. We need pastoral workers in the home. Parents need so many more ideas and help as to how to do this.

The Poor:

There are the materially poor but also the spiritually poor. Hundreds of people are not spiritual. The *Jericho Benedictines* reach out to the poor but they are getting very limited. They have only one priest. Will the diocese help out? The poor they help are all excluded. We need to be a poor Church. Our priests are living in big houses. Could priests live together and free up other parish houses for the poor? The SCIAF board only has bishops. It is very hierarchical. The wealthy are also poor. Poverty is not just material. We need to address spiritual poverty. Mass is the closest thing to heaven on earth so we should always invite others to come. Don't be upset if they say no. Don't be ashamed of being Catholic but be a happy witness. Priests should visit the poor areas not the rich and be seen there and be the professionals seen to be on the other side. We cannot forget the poverty of love suffered by rich kids whose parents big careers mean they never see them.

Vocations:

In the USA there are now many priests, for example in North Carolina. Cannot we have priests from there? We have to encourage our own young and get them involved in, for example, reading at Mass. How attractive is a vocation to the priesthood? Young people have other aspirations. Pray for your own children to become priests.

Associations and Movements:

We need better promotion of our associations, like SVDP, Legion of Mary. This would help in our overall vision, eg awareness of SVDP Special Works Conference that feeds the homeless and lonely.

Culture and discrimination:

In the past there used to be discrimination in the jobs market but not so much now. RC priests are never main celebrants at Remembrance Sunday. It is as if Catholics did not give their lives too. The Church needs to stand up for our people like Cardinal Winning, for example, against sectarianism.

We evangelise by our lifestyles but religion always comes up in the workplace and it is always contentious Catholic issues. But we seem not equipped to answer these because we do not get homilies about them to teach us. Can the homily not instruct the faithful on these matters? The world is so attractive and alluring to young and old and Church teachings pale in comparison and so good people are misled by misplaced ideas of compassion. We need thorough diagnosis of why we have a bad image. A survey of what young people, families, etc know of the Church. What are the obstacles on their way to embracing the Church. People do not understand the Church. They are always being told to think with the times. We should evangelise by our lifestyle. But religion always comes up in the workplace. It is always contentious and usually Catholic issues. But the laity get no explanation of these contentious issues in homilies.

Witness, evangelisation and mission:

Processions evangelise. Paying a visit to church during lunchtime evangelises. Legion of Mary evangelises, lay chaplains in the Apostleship of the Sea evangelise. Prayer evangelises. We could take the mirror challenge, look in the mirror and ask if I pray for new evangelisation, what I am going to do for the church tomorrow in evangelising. *Caring Church Weeks* were good and introduced us to people from religious life with different experiences of youth work. The young were interested in their real experiences. How do we make the transition from conserving to evangelising? There are four steps to spirit-filled evangelising. 1. Prayer. 2. Scripture. 3. Service. 4. Community. What we have left is cultural Catholicism after two generations of lack of Catechesis. So the faith is not passed on but only cultural Catholicism.

Prayer:

We must pray for the Spirit to come to us and, if the world puts obstacles in our way, that the Spirit removes them. Prayer allows us to be inspired by Jesus like the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. Jesus calls us to walk with the Risen Christ. He transforms downcast evangelisers in prayer, through Mass which is the Word of God and Eucharist. Many of us have daily Mass and we are transformed like the Samaritan woman who met Jesus for half an hour at the well. So prayer is listening to Christ. Evangelisation comes from prayer. The Catholic Church has a vast treasury of prayer. This diversity should be encouraged in the Church.

Lapsed:

Catholics Come Home. Bring one with you to Mass. There is the problem of Catholics in irregular situations. They think if they are barred from Communion then what is the point of coming to church? Maybe the lapsed are the first soft target for evangelisation and we should start with them.

Excluded:

We have to respect the excluded as we reach out. Those who cannot go to Holy Communion should be addressed. The Church is conflicted on the GAY issue. They perceive themselves to be judged. No-one asked them what their life is like. The Church needs to look at how it treats GAYs and the marginalised. The trials of life take people away, eg divorce. So they don't feel part of the Church. This means we lose the parents and we lose the children. What can we do about this? Is it structural? Also policies must include others. We should ask priests to apologise to those who now no longer feel part of the Church. Do we go round for a coffee and a chat? We have to create a new forum for encountering them. Not the public media but personal encounters. We need to educate in truth, goodness and beauty and to help them see what is really beautiful and good. We need to get the excluded involved. The Wayside has volunteers who are in irregular situations but they are doing good and this is the best environment to engage their faith, ie. not all about sexuality.

Ecumenical:

We need to focus on the Holy Spirit and work with Pentecostal groups, like *Healing Rooms*. We are losing our Catholics to them. There are no barriers at ground level to ecumenical work. We are just brothers who love Jesus. How does the ecumenical dimension tie in to our renewal? We need to be with other Christians as churches together. Can we not learn from other faiths? (applause). We have a lot to learn from evangelical churches. Ecumenism has often been formal and top down. It would be good for it to be at ground level. We can learn much from interfaith.

Broader Church:

What about unity with other dioceses?
Does Paisley reach out to Galloway?

The Holy Spirit:

We should make space for *Baptism in the Spirit*. Spirit-filled evangelisers are really born-again Christians. Then everything in our faith comes alive, like sacraments and a personal relationship with Jesus.

Positive:

A new Catholic wanted to say there is a lot of good in the Catholic Church. She came from the Protestant religion but the Catholic faith touched her in a big way.

Communication:

There should be better promotion of our associations, eg the SVDP Special Works Conference, the Legion of Mary. This would help in our overall vision. Then there are the externals, the public signs of faith. Someone passed on a Holy Spirit lapel badge to a woman and she passed it on to another. EWTN should be promoted. It has good Catechesis and gives confidence to evangelise. It shows the hunger others have for the Church and for truth. We have to explain what we mean by evangelisation. We need to communicate better.

Sunday Mass and Mass times:

Lent masses. Getting the Mass and the Gospel daily sets us up for the day. *Workers Masses* should be restated to allow workers to get to Mass. There should be a workers mass or exposition because strength comes from Christ. Short Masses can help but these are not as good as longer ones when the faithful can get good instruction at them. Sunday Mass should be inclusive. Families should be able to talk of a net of help and compassion they participated in during the week to inspire others to go out and communicate. The music must be invigorating as it is in evangelical services. Sometimes the priests and community are too prescriptive of music. *Children's Liturgy* needs new life breathed into it. Sometimes they got stopped for not being liturgically correct but it is important to be pastoral for kids. We need to personalise liturgy and worship.

Involvement in civic leadership:

The post referendum is a unique opportunity for us to evangelise the political and economic world. The people should not leave this up to the bishops. The Church is under threat from politicians' and we are not giving enough leadership there. We gave them an easy ride on abortion and euthanasia. We may soon have to apologise for being Catholic. *(applause)*.

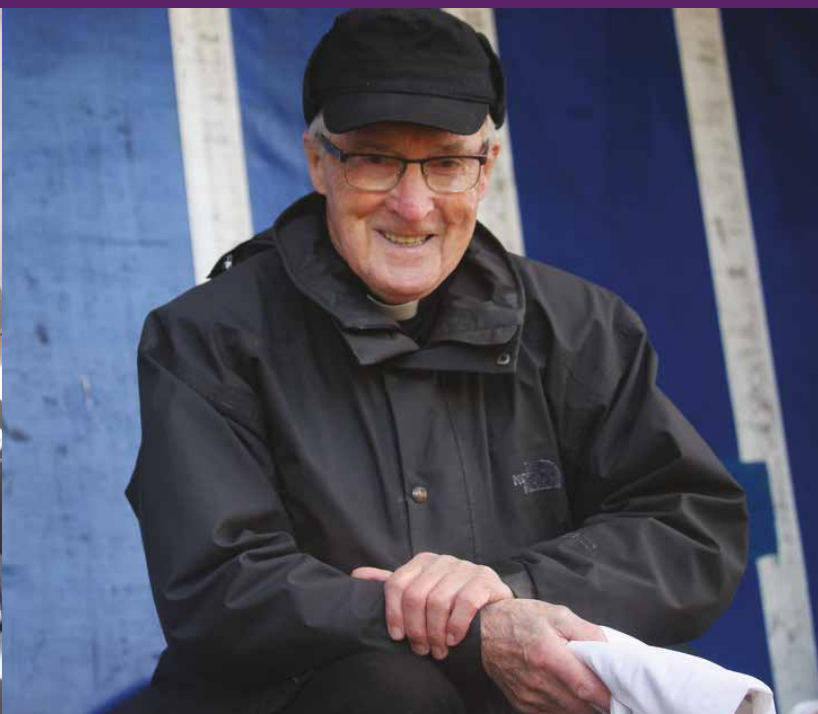
Synod:

This is a great idea for the long term but it should not postpone things now, especially regarding the poor and the young. The bishop's presentation on *Evangelium Gaudii* and the idea of a Synod was inspirational. The Synod is particularly welcome. It is especially welcome on the context of Vatican II. Will it be mindful of Vatican II? *(applause)*. A practical point: in the selection criteria there must be no cliques. Will it be the same faces? *(big applause)*. If it is successful it could be rolled out over all the diocese of Scotland into national synod. Could we discuss this at the Bishop's Conference? This diocesan synod could pave the way for the rest of Scotland *(applause)*. *Evangelii Gaudium* is a fantastic blue print. With EG our hearts are burning within us. We have to start now. We need to keep an element of realism. How do we achieve all this? The challenge of Sunday Catholics is a formidable one. The period leading to the Synod has to be one of introspection. Fear rather than sin is what holds us back. It is challenging but there's no other option. How do we direct this diocesan buzz? Get everyone singing off the same hymn sheet so priests and laity are on the same page. This is the importance of post-synod binding decrees. How does such a broad group as a whole clergy and diocese stay on message? It is a big ask and terrifying. How do we stay within doctrine? If we stay on Jesus could we stay off doctrine? Should we get back to basics first or just get out there? Watch we do not set ourselves up for a fall. People need the basics before they can get into Synod mode.

"We must encourage families to come to church together.

Many are frightened to come with young children because they are noisy but a crèche is not part of the Mass. Parishes need to be welcoming to children."

*"Some exciting lay-led initiatives
are beginning to bear fruit here
in our own Diocese."*



4. Our Synod Sessions



Our Charter

The Diocese of Paisley values, promotes and actively encourages the role of the laity in the new evangelisation as an important way to achieve the mission of the Church as, all together, we share the Good News. Through mutual responsibility, dialogue and action, all members of the diocesan community - including clergy, religious and laity - will work in collaborative ministry to provide a model of Church relevant to our context as an example of what can be accomplished in the future.

The Diocese of Paisley, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and through the patronage of Our Lady of Paisley, St. Mirin and St. Margaret, will work towards being a faith-filled community where:

1. We are committed to effective evangelisation centred on each Christian's personal relationship with Jesus Christ and a life lived with faith, hope and charity.
2. We recognise and celebrate that it is in the Sacred Liturgy, above all, that we encounter Jesus Christ as the source of our lives, our salvation and our worship. The Eucharist gives life and reality to the Church and is, therefore, the source and summit of our Christian life.
3. We recognise that Faith formation and active discipleship are of fundamental importance in developing the role of the laity in the new evangelisation within our parish and diocesan communities.



Our Synod

Paisley Diocese

All together sharing the Good News

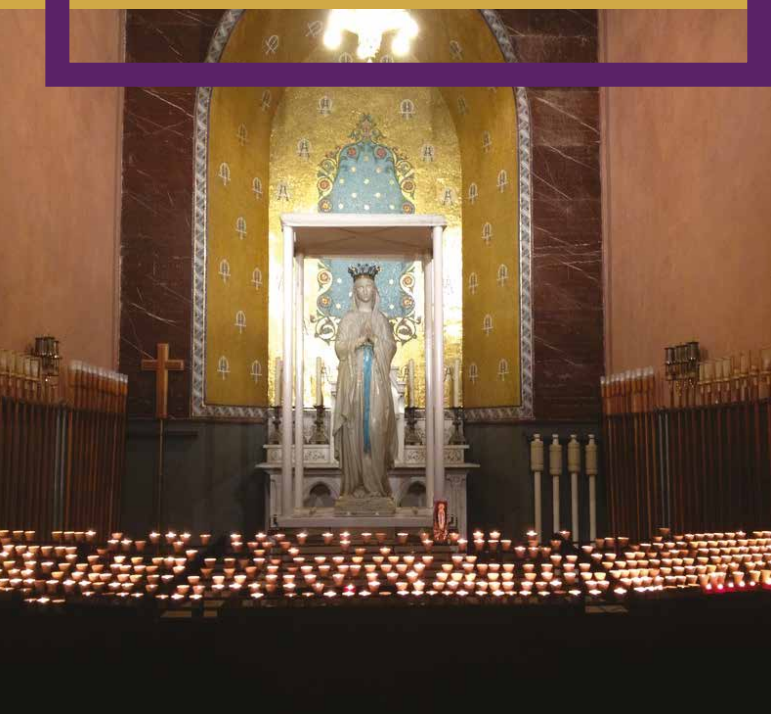
4. We will encourage a dynamic and collaborative engagement among all those called through baptism into the family of God to use their gifts and talents to build up the body of Christ in an atmosphere of mutual respect.
5. It is our intention that all families will feel welcome when they enter their church for liturgies, sacramental preparation or support of any kind.
6. Our young people are valued as bringing life to the Church.
7. We commit ourselves to reaching out to all of society, in particular those who feel excluded, offering witness to our belief that each person, made in the image and likeness of God, is deserving of dignity and respect.
8. The structures of the diocese will be renewed to meet the needs of the diverse communities that they serve.
9. We are committed to making our parishes welcoming communities of faith, and to each member of the parish community feeling that they belong and have something to contribute.
10. We understand communication in all its components - the message, the medium and the language - as central to the success of the Church in the modern era. We will seek to actively use communication to promote the Gospel message of peace and reconciliation.

Principles and Practicalities



"All of what follows is the deliberation of the delegates in Synodal sessions and almost every word was voted on and passed by delegates. It was the conviction of the Bishop that the Holy Spirit would speak through the whole people of God of the Diocese and we believe what is here contained is what the Holy Spirit says to the Church in Paisley."

4.1 Evangelisation



From *Evangelii Gaudium*

In virtue of their baptism, all the members of the People of God have become missionary disciples (cf. Mt 28:19).

All the baptised, whatever their position in the Church or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelisation, and it would be insufficient to envisage a plan of evangelisation to be carried out by professionals while the rest of the faithful would simply be passive recipients.

The new evangelisation calls for personal involvement on the part of each of the baptised. Every Christian is challenged, here and now, to be actively engaged in evangelisation; indeed, anyone who has truly experienced God's saving love does not need much time or lengthy training to go out and proclaim that love.

Every Christian is a missionary to the extent that he or she has encountered the love of God in Christ Jesus: we no longer say that we are "disciples" and "missionaries", but rather that we are always "missionary disciples".

If we are not convinced, let us look at those first disciples, who, immediately after encountering the gaze of Jesus, went forth to proclaim him joyfully: "We have found the Messiah!" (Jn 1:41). The Samaritan woman became a missionary immediately after speaking with Jesus and many Samaritans come to believe in him "because of the woman's testimony" (Jn 4:39). So too, Saint Paul, after his encounter with Jesus Christ, "immediately proclaimed Jesus" (Acts 9:20; cf. 22:6-21). So what are we waiting for?

Of course, all of us are called to mature in our work as evangelisers. We want to have better training, a deepening love and a clearer witness to the Gospel. In this sense, we ought to let others be constantly evangelising us. But this does not mean that we should postpone the evangelising mission; rather, each of us should find ways to communicate Jesus wherever we are.

All of us are called to offer others an explicit witness to the saving love of the Lord, who despite our imperfections offers us his closeness, his word and his strength, and gives meaning to our lives. In your heart you know that it is not the same to live without him; what you have come to realise, what has helped you to live and given you hope, is what you also need to communicate to others. Our falling short of perfection should be no excuse; on the contrary, mission is a constant stimulus not to remain mired in mediocrity but to continue growing. The witness of faith that each Christian is called to offer leads us to say with Saint Paul: "Not that I have already obtained this, or am already perfect; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own" (Phil 3:12-13).

Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 120-121

I am convinced the Holy Spirit has been speaking to us and that we listened and really heard His Word.

4.1. Evangelisation

4.1.1. Principles

1. **General:** Effective evangelisation proceeds from a life lived with faith and charity which has a personal relationship with God at its centre. It overflows from being joyful and positive in our daily lives and allowing our faith to shine out through care and love of those around us. This is the foundation upon which every evangelising action and initiative must grow.
2. **Prayer:** To move forward in evangelisation we will develop a life of holiness through prayer, both individually and in groups, encouraging one another in our faith and growing in our confidence to share it. We will seek the power and action of the Holy Spirit to be effective evangelists.
3. **Evangelisation by example:** The example of our lives is the first and most potent Gospel witness we can offer. Our attendance at church, our integrity based on Christian values, the acts of kindness carried out day to day, and the hope we have based on a life of prayer speak clearly to others of our faith.
4. **Active Evangelisation:** Active evangelisation takes many forms, from offering to pray for specific intentions to sharing aspects of our faith journey as well as extending invitations to join our community. Each encounter requires courage, a discerning spirit and a compassionate attitude.
5. **Everyday Evangelisation:** The normal cycle of our personal and parish life offers the most immediate opportunities for us to witness to our faith. Family celebrations like baptisms, weddings and funerals invite us to reach out and encourage our brothers and sisters in their faith and lead to open discussions about faith and why we believe.
6. **Evangelisation in Public life:** Evangelisation includes all the aspects of Scottish public life. More of our Catholics should be engaged and witness in political and economic life and in news and media outlets.
7. **Opportunities for Evangelisation:** There are many places, events and programmes that provide opportunities where people can encounter faith, meet, pray and reconcile. Every parish will seek to have groups and organisations active in providing opportunities for faith encounters.
8. **Benchmarking Evangelisation:** Initiatives in Evangelisation which are bearing fruit in one parish can be shared with the diocese. We can learn from other groups, churches and Christian communities about what is effective today in terms of evangelisation.
9. **Evangelisation and those who have no faith or who have not declared a faith:** We recognise the challenge of the growing number of people who claim to have no religion and the huge variety of groupings which it involves, from anti-religious (Humanist and Secularist Societies) to people who simply do not have a connection with the Church or any faith group. Strong affiliation to anti-religious societies or views is, in fact, very rare in our society. In the most recent census the total numbers of those claiming to associate as agnostic, atheist, humanist or secularist were outnumbered by those claiming to be Jedi Knights! Nonetheless the atheist, secularist and humanist lobbies appear to have gained a disproportionate influence in the media and in corridors of power. They succeed partly because many of our own people no longer identify with the organisation of the Church. The failure of catechesis and the recent scandals in the Church have led to a loss of confidence in hierarchies and leadership as being qualified to give direction to people's lives. Catholics nowadays often encounter hostility to the faith, or pre-conceived ideas and prejudice about the Church, and need to have ways to counter this hostility with constructive arguments and factual evidence.
10. We are aware that the Church in Scotland is not effectively making its voice heard partly because our lay faithful are not well educated in the current issues of faith and thereby lack confidence to respond to these challenges or communicate key Church teachings in the public domain. Many Catholics in the public square feel embarrassed and uncomfortable in discussing their faith and admit to a fear factor in talking about being Catholic or about the Gospel or sharing our faith. It is clear, and our people have expressed this time and time again, that the lay faithful need training in our faith, on the positions we adopt in society, on how to explain them and on how to share our faith.

4.1.2. Practicalities

11. We might invite existing groups who have a charism for evangelisation into parishes. We could establish teams to organise and invite parishioners to evangelistic programmes in each parish or at deanery level. We could offer evangelisation training courses in parishes.
12. We can learn from successful evangelisation projects in other dioceses. We could also invite well-known speakers to our diocese.
13. We are aware that some programmes are not originally Catholic and that we need to guard against moving away from the teachings of our Church's Magisterium. Similarly, checks will be in place to ensure that those becoming evangelists do not contradict the Church's teaching. But if programmes are presented in the correct way, with the Eucharist at their centre, they will succeed.
14. It would be useful to create a diocesan-wide platform to post invitations for events that are happening locally, with perhaps a named person in each parish.
15. The parish level may be too small to effectively achieve this and perhaps we should consider working at deanery level or at the level of parishes in a shared locality.
16. Parish libraries could be established to include Catholic reading materials and DVDs for children, youth and adults.

*"We have to
be the best we
can be before we
will attract others.
Evangelisation
needs strength."
- From Parish Consultation*

4.2

The Liturgy

The Source and Summit of our Synod

All together celebrating the Liturgy and Sacraments



From *Evangelii Gaudium*

It is worth remembering that “the liturgical proclamation of the word of God, especially in the eucharistic assembly, is not so much a time for meditation and catechesis as a dialogue between God and his people, a dialogue in which the great deeds of salvation are proclaimed and the demands of the covenant are continually restated”. The homily has special importance due to its eucharistic context: it surpasses all forms of catechesis as the supreme moment in the dialogue between God and his people which lead up to sacramental communion. The homily takes up once more the dialogue which the Lord has already established with his people. The preacher must know the heart of his community, in order to realise where its desire for God is alive and ardent, as well as where that dialogue, once loving, has been thwarted and is now barren.

The homily cannot be a form of entertainment like those presented by the media, yet it does need to give life and meaning to the celebration. It is a distinctive genre, since

it is preaching situated within the framework of a liturgical celebration; hence it should be brief and avoid taking on the semblance of a speech or a lecture. A preacher may be able to hold the attention of his listeners for a whole hour, but in this case his words become more important than the celebration of faith. If the homily goes on too long, it will affect two characteristic elements of the liturgical celebration: its balance and its rhythm. When preaching takes place within the context of the liturgy, it is part of the offering made to the Father and a mediation of the grace which Christ pours out during the celebration. This context demands that preaching should guide the assembly, and the preacher, to a life-changing communion with Christ in the Eucharist. This means that the words of the preacher must be measured, so that the Lord, more than his minister, will be the centre of attention.

Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 137-138

“There has been an increasing number of lay men and women who have been set on the path to sainthood.”

4.2.1 Principles

1. The Liturgical renewal of the Second Vatican Council was at the heart of the main aims of the Second Vatican Council to update and renew the Church and its institutions, to encourage Christian Unity and to energise Catholics to reach out to the whole world.
2. It is in the Liturgy, above all, that we encounter Jesus Christ as the source of our lives, our salvation and our worship. The Eucharist gives life and reality to the Church and is, therefore, the source and summit of our Christian life. To that end the Church wills the full participation of all the faithful, clergy, religious and laity, in the celebration of Sunday Mass, in the Sacraments and in the Prayer of the Church (The Divine Office). Such desires were expressed throughout our Synod Sessions.
3. Many of our liturgies are prayerful and devotional moments where we can foster a personal relationship with Jesus and express our faith. It is only in such moments of reflective prayer that God can speak to us of the Church of which He calls us to be part. We are still learning not just “to say our prayers” but how really “to pray the Mass” and, from there, how to sanctify our daily lives.
4. There is still a need for deeper understanding of the Mass through catechesis and formation. Many of us do not understand the meaning of sacraments or the importance of Mass. A help to this understanding will involve breaking down theological terms – such as, for example, the notion of Christ as Priest, Prophet and King – which are at the heart of our expression of the Eucharist, but which can leave the lay faithful feeling marginalised and excluded.
5. Together with its personal dimension we look for Sunday Mass to be the gathering of a community of faith that says, ‘I believe’, within the context of the Sunday Congregation (= “gathering together”) as an expression of its public nature. To that end deeper participation of the lay faithful in Mass will create in us a stronger sense of belonging to our parish, to our diocese and to the Universal Church.
6. Without detracting from the unique role of our priests, and the ministry of our deacons, which we acknowledge and honour, we must encourage a greater awareness within our lay faithful of the universal call to holiness and of the Priesthood of all the Baptised. All of our lay people are called by their Baptism, Confirmation and Participation in the Eucharist to themselves be Priests, Prophets and Kings after the example of Christ himself. This means encouraging models that recognise the role and ministries of the lay faithful as complementary with the role of the clergy. The ministries of Priests, Deacons and Lay Faithful are honoured and enhanced by this mutual complementarity.
7. We look to find the presence and power of the Holy Spirit and His gifts in our Eucharistic celebration. It is the place where we pray for each other, reminding those who do not come to Mass that they are included in our prayers.
8. We see our Liturgy as a harmony of communion and mission. Its missionary dimension has the aim of reaching out to the whole world. Intercessions are a privileged place where we reach out in heart and prayer to the outside world, locally and globally. The Liturgy is to be lived by us in the world and beyond, praying for the world at Mass.
9. We acknowledge the things we already do well, from encouraging volunteers to transport the housebound to Mass with minibuses and car pools, to taking Holy Communion to the housebound, from high levels of participation in the Sacraments of Baptism, First Holy Communion and Confirmation to the establishment of RCIA and hospitality after Mass.
10. It is from this perspective that we see the importance of Welcome Ministry and a culture of friendly and outgoing parishioners who welcome newcomers and marginalised. Being welcoming is helped by having a variety of styles of celebrating Mass so that people can find themselves at home in one or other. Moreover, while our churches are places of reverence, our porches and halls are places of welcome and fellowship for those who do not go to refreshments in the hall after Mass. There are appropriate moments even in the Liturgy for introducing and welcoming new arrivals.
11. The Scriptures and homily are important parts of our Mass and our laypeople look to these for encouragement, instruction and Christian formation.

A sine qua non, of course, is that these should be audible and that both sound systems and readers will not be deficient. The laity also welcomes practices like bulletins having more detailed explanations of Readings to supplement the homily. We want to know our Scriptures and developing the taste for the Word of God at Mass that leads us to seek out parish-based Scripture Groups that make use of biblical commentaries or introduce us to *Lectio Divina*. Post Synod homilies will also raise expectations that our lay faithful will do more than turn up to Mass on Sunday, and will look to what service they do and what action they can take up.

12. All of these issues should be considered in terms of our current and future resources. Presently, Parishes typically have one priest who celebrates every Mass in the parish. While recognising the strong attachment many people still have to their parishes, and what individual churches mean to many fine people who have helped to build up our parishes over the years, and to families who have celebrated the most important events of family life in them, we may now need to examine other models of parish life. For example, we might examine whether Masses could be better synchronised among parishes, whether priests could swap parishes for Masses on occasion, and whether the number of parishes, some strong but others only hanging on, is now impacting negatively on the celebration of our Liturgy. Large churches with low attendance can be off-putting and it may be the case that fewer parishes, or Masses better resourced and with more people present, would improve the quality of our worship.

13. The Liturgy manifests our joy in the faith. Since *the joy of the Lord* is our strength we should aim at having more joy in our Masses. Music is an expression of our joy and should be an integral part of our Sunday celebration of Mass and of our celebration of the Sacraments. Our major diocesan and deanery events are also popular and attractive and foster joy and encouragement in our faith.

14. We will try to ensure that the celebrations of our Sacraments will be evangelising moments so that we move away from a culture where Catholics are “sacramentalised” without being evangelised and where many baptised Catholics do not practice.

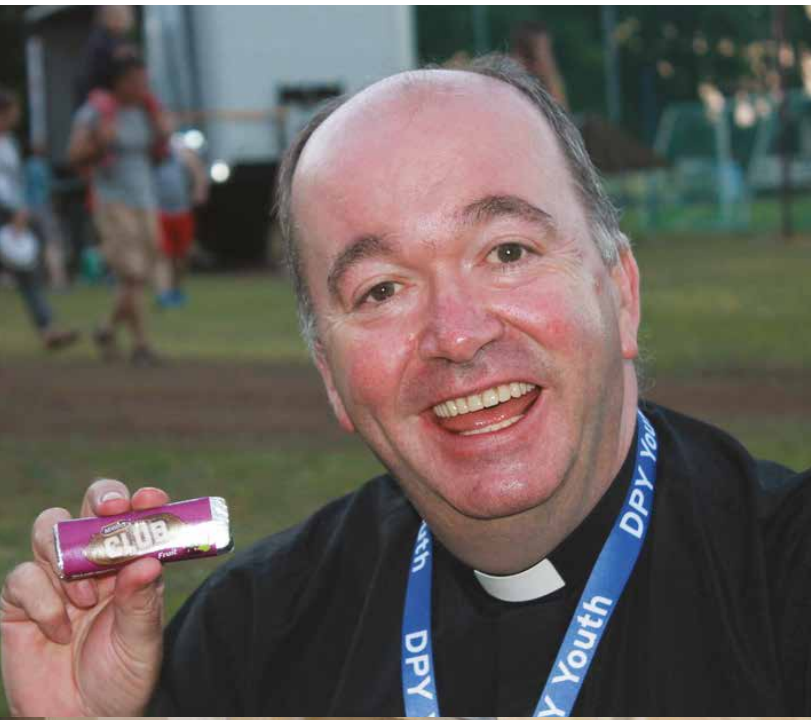
“Matt turned to God for help. He began to go to daily Mass. He often spent his free time - the time he used to spend in the pub - praying.”

4.2.2. Practicalities

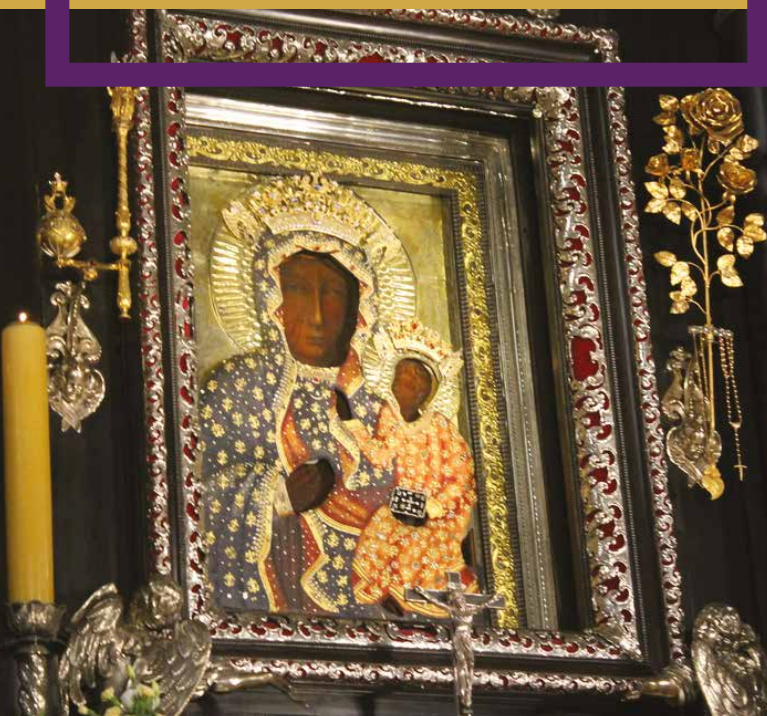
15. Young people are sometimes involved with music ministries that are joyful in praising God but we are aware that there is resistance to involving them even though their new hymns and music can draw young people. Could we look at the possibility of a more systematic use of our school choirs, bands and orchestras at our regular Sunday celebrations of Mass as well as at major events?
16. We should undertake to welcome and instruct parents alongside their children at the Sacraments of Initiation of Children (Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist), clarifying with them that the Sacraments are the free choice of parents who really desire them for their children, rather than about conformity to convention and Catholic culture.
17. We should have the courage to invite parents to tell us why they do not return regularly to Church after the celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation with their children.
18. Should we consider, where appropriate, the possibility of more generally and explicitly inviting candidates and parents to consider delaying Confirmation and First Holy Communion for some time until the young people are prepared to make a fuller and more conscious commitment to the practice of their faith?
19. We will renew our diocesan commitment to the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
20. We should try to rediscover the grace of sacramentals like the Sign of the Cross, the use of holy water and the display of holy statues and images.
21. Post-Synod homilies should seek to encourage the lay faithful to do more than turn up to Mass on Sunday, and to look to what service they can do and what action they can take up.
22. While safeguarding the central notion of Mass as the Assembly (congregation) of all God's People, and with due regard to the Church's law on the number of Masses which may be celebrated by a priest on any given day, could we consider a wider availability of Masses for particular groups, e.g. Youth Masses, Healing Masses and Family Masses?
25. While giving first priority to developing our use of the Church's Liturgy in the Divine Office, could we also give consideration to reintroducing and reviving devotions like Holy Hours, Forty Hours, Benediction, and Adoration in traditional and new forms?
26. Where possible, could ways be found to enable our parish churches to be open all day to allow private visits of the faithful?

"We need to bring the young into our renewal. Children's Masses fill our churches when we have them."

- From Parish Consultation



4.3 Formation



From *Evangelii Gaudium*

Lay people are, put simply, the vast majority of the People of God. The minority – ordained ministers – are at their service. There has been a growing awareness of the identity and mission of the laity in the Church.

We can count on many lay persons, although still not nearly enough, who have a deeply-rooted sense of community and great fidelity to the tasks of charity, catechesis and the celebration of the faith.

At the same time, a clear awareness of this responsibility of the laity, grounded in their baptism and confirmation, does not appear in the same way in all places. In some cases, it is because lay persons have not been given the formation needed to take on important responsibilities.

In others, it is because in their particular Churches room has not been made for them to speak and to act, due to an excessive clericalism which keeps them away from decision-making.

Even if many are now involved in the lay ministries, this involvement is not reflected in a greater penetration of Christian values in the social, political and economic sectors. It often remains tied to tasks within the Church, without a real commitment to applying the Gospel to the transformation of society. The formation of the laity and the evangelisation of professional and intellectual life represent a significant pastoral challenge.

Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, no. 102

“As sharers in the role of Christ as priest, prophet and King, the laity have their work cut out for them in the life and activity of the Church.”

4.3.1. Principles

1. **General:** The Synod has identified formation as of fundamental importance in encouraging the role of the laity in the new evangelisation. This is true for every section of the diocese and will be a key ingredient in the success of the new evangelisation in our parish and diocesan communities.
2. **Personal Faith Development:** Personal faith development is an individual imperative and a corporate responsibility at parish and diocesan level. Initiatives including programmes, events and materials will be made available to foster better understanding of the faith, deeper spiritual life, and appreciation of the sacredness of the sacraments, especially the celebration of Sunday Mass.
3. **Positions of responsibility:** All those in positions of responsibility within the local Catholic community, including teachers, religious, priests, laity and those who speak on behalf of the Church, will receive training, ongoing support and formation for the roles they perform. Continuous professional development is necessary and integral to all occupations in the diocese whether clerical, teaching, pastoral or administrative.
4. **Materials:** A range of materials explaining basic Catholic beliefs, current moral issues and teachings relevant to living as a Christian will be available and accessible. We need user-friendly summaries in plain English available on parish and diocesan websites, social media outlets and hardcopy format.

4.3.2. Practicalities

5. It would be useful to establish a diocesan office/commission which can offer resources for faith formation, discipleship and outreach programmes to be implemented in our parishes. It would be useful and, indeed, necessary to have a programme of formation in the diocese. It might also be useful to invest in training trainers to lead initiatives in the diocese. Good and accessible summaries of Catholic teaching would be useful for many parishioners.
6. There is a great thirst for the establishment of local Scripture Study groups. More generally, we might offer resources for reflection on Scripture. As Catholics, we must always remember that hand in hand with our study of Scripture, we would also study the Church's tradition and the Magisterium. It would be useful to establish the demand for this in each parish and avoid duplicating what exists already by working together in groups of parishes where helpful and appropriate. While keeping these initiatives local, perhaps deanery study groups would be a more realistic possibility. We would need to ensure that we have well-trained leaders and perhaps depend on biblical commentaries. It would be good to invite our brothers and sisters from the other Christian Churches and ecclesial communities to participate. *Lectio Divina* sessions could be incorporated into study times. Various groups at the Synod raised the possibility of using the RCIA as a model for reflecting and developing our faith. The RCIA methodology is helpful. We might emphasise that RCIA groups are also open to practicing and non-practicing Catholics as a way of reconnecting them with their faith. Learning more about RCIA would enable us to form an opinion as to whether this would work effectively. RCIA certainly makes us think of developing a model for reflecting on our faith that could be standardised and made robustly Catholic.

"She did not try to bring Jesus to her friends with words. She tried to bring Jesus to them with her example and how she lived her life."

4.4 Collaborative Ministry



From *Evangelii Gaudium*

The salvation which God has wrought, and the Church joyfully proclaims, is for everyone. God has found a way to unite himself to every human being in every age. He has chosen to call them together as a people and not as isolated individuals. No one is saved by himself or herself, individually, or by his or her own efforts. God attracts us by taking into account the complex interweaving of personal relationships entailed in the life of a human community.

This people which God has chosen and called is the Church.

Jesus did not tell the apostles to form an exclusive and elite group. He said: “Go and make disciples of all nations” (Mt 28:19). Saint Paul tells us in the people of God, in the Church, “there is neither Jew or Greek... for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal 3:28).

To those who feel far from God and the Church, to all those who are fearful or indifferent, I would like to say this: the Lord, with great respect and love, is also calling you to be a part of his people!

Being Church means being God’s people, in accordance with the great plan of his fatherly love. This means that we are to be God’s leaven in the midst of humanity. It means proclaiming and bringing God’s salvation into our world, which often goes astray and needs to be encouraged, given hope and strengthened on the way. The Church must be a place of mercy freely given, where everyone can feel welcomed, loved, forgiven and encouraged to live the good life of the Gospel.

Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 113-114

“Without discrimination women should be participants in the life of the Church, and also in consultation and the process of coming to decisions.”

4.4 Collaborative Ministry

4.4.1. Principles

1. **General:** We will reject any model of clergy-laity relations, characterised at its extremes by clericalism on one side and passivity on the other, in favour of a dynamic and collaborative engagement where all Christ's faithful use their gifts and talents to build up the body of Christ.
2. **Care of Priests:** The care and support of our priests is a vital concern of the Catholic community. Regular opportunities will be scheduled for rest, recreation and retreats for our clergy. Appropriate pastoral and fraternal support will prevent them becoming isolated from each other and from the diocese. We believe that on-going formation, with refresher courses in theology, pastoral care and homiletics will help develop their effectiveness in ministry.
3. **Empowerment:** Our priests will be encouraged to seek ways of sharing appropriate tasks with laypersons. This requires building confidence in the laity to take on roles they have not previously performed. Parishioners will be encouraged to volunteer time, gifts and experience for the benefit of the community.
4. **Opportunity:** There are many ministries that will usefully benefit from lay leadership, for example: mission and evangelisation, family support, youth and social justice, visiting the sick, leading clubs and societies and attending to the practical needs of the parish. We commit ourselves to fostering a culture where good ideas will be enabled and fledgling talents nurtured.
5. **Matching gifts:** We should further develop processes for identifying people's gifts and talents and matching them to the appropriate service. This leads to successful parish and diocesan ministry. Everyone will have a place to serve.

4.4.2. Practicalities

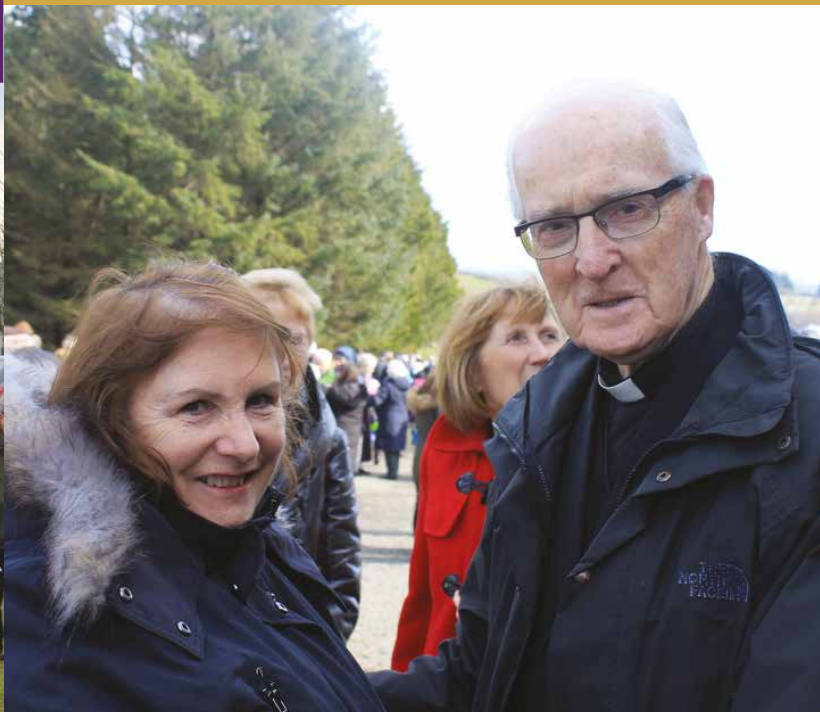
6. We could explore ways of handing over leadership to parishioners through the Parish Pastoral Council and other groups, with the parish priest as part of the team and overseer.
7. We could maintain a volunteers' register detailing skills, experience and availability at parish and diocesan level. We can find mechanisms to match appropriate people's gifts and skills with particular needs at hand through the priest and parish councils.
8. We might establish accountability relationships with priests to ensure each receives adequate rest, recreation and support in executing his responsibilities.

"We should celebrate the gifts people have in the parish and build a vision together for the parish."

- From Parish Consultation



4.5 Families



From *Evangelii Gaudium*

The family is experiencing a profound cultural crisis, as are all communities and social bonds.

In the case of the family, the weakening of these bonds is particularly serious because the family is the fundamental cell of society, where we learn to live with others despite our differences and to belong to one another; it is also the place where parents pass on the faith to their children.

Marriage now tends to be viewed as a form of mere emotional satisfaction that can be constructed in any way or modified at will. But the indispensable contribution of marriage to society transcends the feelings and momentary needs of the couple.

As the French bishops have taught, it is not born “of loving sentiment, ephemeral by definition, but from the depth of the obligation assumed by the spouses who accept to enter a total communion of life”.

Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, no. 66

“Children should be so involved in the local community of the parish that they will acquire a consciousness of being living and active members of the people of God.”

4.5. Families

4.5.1. Principles

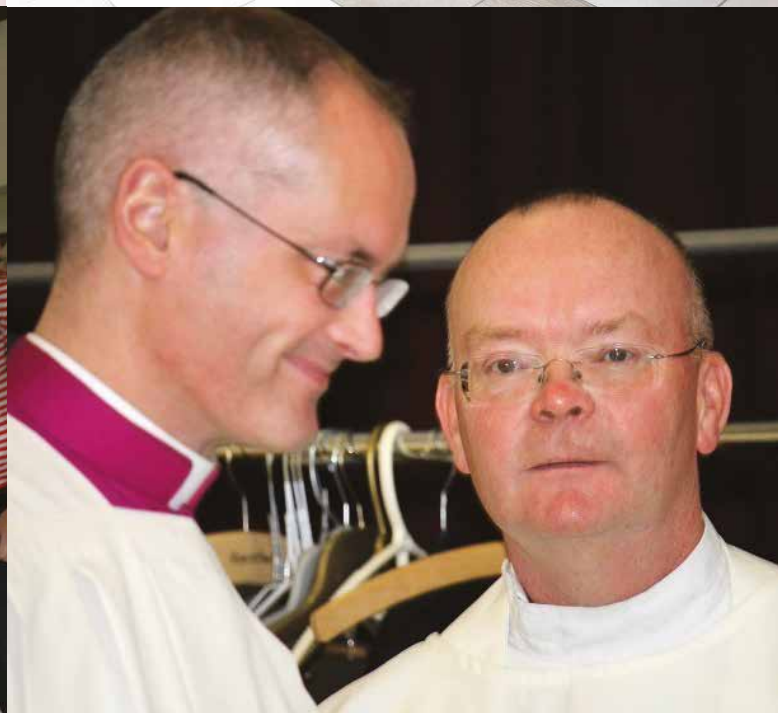
1. **Support for Marriage and Family:** The family and marriage will be supported at parish and diocesan level. We will encourage ministries which endeavour to re-awaken an understanding of the vocation to marriage and family life, especially in helping couples to grow in their relationship with God through their relationship with each other and with their children. Practical resources will be made available to help parents raise their children as confident Catholics. We will create and improve mechanisms that integrate parish and school life, especially in the preparation for the Sacraments. Such programmes will seek to reinforce the role of parents as the primary educators of their children in the ways of faith.
2. **Evangelisation in the Family:** Parents are the Evangelisers in the family, the first and primary educators of their children in the ways of faith. In particular, we will seek to support families with instruction and materials which encourage them to establish family prayer and faith discussion as a normal routine of family life.
3. **Sacramental preparation:** Marriage and baptismal preparation, preparation for first sacraments and RCIA provide families, children and adults with an open door to the Church and the Church to them. These are good opportunities to engage those who have a tenuous relationship with the Church. We will seek to discern how these brief connections can be used to proclaim the Gospel of mercy and peace.
4. **Help for marriages:** Marriage faces many stresses and pressures in modern life. Accordingly, we will better advertise and promote Catholic agencies which provide support for marriage. Diocesan and parish websites can provide links to helpful material that provide practical guidance on strengthening marriage and family life.
5. **Family friendly:** Many initiatives are working in parishes and at diocesan level to support marriage and family life and will be developed, including: Children's Liturgies, Family Masses, Young Parents' groups, Children's Choir, marriage anniversary Masses and a variety of youth clubs and groups.
6. **Welcoming to families:** All families will feel welcome when they enter church for liturgies, sacramental preparation or support of any kind.

4.5.2. Practicalities

7. We could strive to create a culture of support for families. We might seek to establish ways to involve families in parish life. We can seek to organise social and pastoral events for families and ways to reconnect with families.
8. **Safeguarding:** The Diocese of Paisley and all our agencies, parishes and youth and family initiatives will be committed to the safeguarding of our young people and children and to fulfilling the policies, protocols, procedures and guidelines laid down by Scots Law and by the Holy See and the Bishops' Conference of Scotland.

“Evangelisation
starts with
families.”

- From Parish Consultation



4.6 Youth and Schools



From *Evangelii Gaudium*

Youth ministry, as traditionally organised, has also suffered the impact of social changes. Young people often fail to find responses to their concerns, needs, problems and hurts in the usual structures. As adults, we find it hard to listen patiently to them, to appreciate their concerns and demands, and to speak to them in a language they can understand. For the same reason, our efforts in the field of education do not produce the results expected. The rise and growth of associations and movements mostly made up of young people can be seen as the work of the Holy Spirit, who blazes new trails to meet their expectations and their search for a deep spirituality and a more real sense of belonging. There remains a need, however, to ensure that these associations actively participate in the Church's overall pastoral efforts.

Even if it is not always easy to approach young people, progress has been made in two areas: the awareness that the entire community is called to evangelise and educate the young, and the urgent need for the young to exercise greater leadership. We should recognise that despite the present crisis of commitment and communal relationships, many young people are making common cause before the problems of our world and are taking up various forms of activism and volunteer work. Some take part in the life of the Church as members of service groups and various missionary initiatives in their own dioceses and in other places. How beautiful it is to see that young people are “street preachers” (*callejeros de la fe*), joyfully bringing Jesus to every street, every town square and every corner of the earth.

Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 105-106

“The best youth ministers
are the young themselves.”

4.6.1. Principles

1. **Youth bring life:** Young people open up new possibilities and bring life to our church environments. We will seek further ways to engage with them in our diocese by working with families, parishes, schools and existing youth programmes. We do not forget that by engaging children we open the door to their parents and extended families.
2. **Family, School and Parish links:** The faith communities of family, school and parish provide a potent force when they work in unison to form and support children in their faith journeys. We will endeavour to do more to integrate this triangular support structure, placing parents and families at the centre of efforts to help children become mature Christian disciples.
3. **The benefits of Catholic schools:** The faith environment and witness of our Catholic schools are beacons of light in our secular society and provide fertile ground for the transmission of faith. We will seek to extend initiatives like Caritas and the Pope Francis Awards beyond their specific age ranges.
4. **Strategy for working with Youth:** We will review our diocesan strategy for youth and ask young people what would work for them. We will continue to encourage peer ministry by giving young people leadership roles and responsibilities. This could include leading an evangelising fellowship programme and arranging music for parish youth Masses and school services.
5. **Working with existing Youth ministries:** Several ministries, programmes, places and events target youth and we will continue to encourage their work and learn from their success. Youth to Lourdes and World Youth Day pilgrimages, University and F.E. chaplaincies, GLO and NET provide young people with significant faith encounters that can be nurtured and developed.

4.6.2. Practicalities

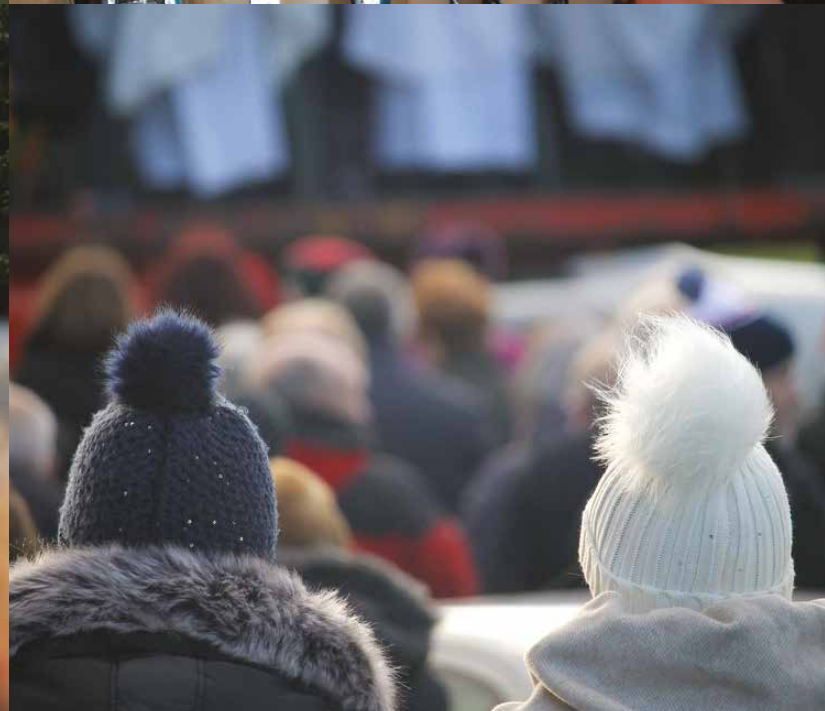
6. We could develop a strategy, together with young people, to allow them to express their wants and needs, including their involvement in the parish. The term “Youth” includes many ages and stages and there is not a ‘one size fits all’ programme for them. Some like traditional liturgies and others prefer modern. We could perhaps seek to describe, rather than define, “youth”.
7. A greater effort could be made in advertising and promoting existing youth programmes and services operating in the diocese. We might consider investing resources in expanding and developing the Caritas programme beyond the current age range. It is important to continue to develop better links between parish, school and family.
8. We should consider introducing a structured fellowship programme for young people. This needs explanation and could be based around the sacraments. It might be possible to encourage youth involvement in SSVP and Legion of Mary etc., which may require some preparatory work with those already in those organisations so that the young people will have a happy and fulfilling experience with them.
9. We could create opportunities to encourage active participation of young people in the life of the parish. This will encourage young people to live out the common vocation to holiness. Participation as Servers, Readers, Passkeepers, etc., encourages young people to a deeper participation in the life of the Church. Additionally, for boys, this can be a stimulus to consider a vocation to the Priesthood or Religious Life, for girls to consider a vocation to the Religious Life, for all young people, a stimulus to considering their vocation within the church, whether single or married. We could create opportunities to encourage active participation of the youth in the parish.
10. There will be clear statements about our commitment to safeguarding. It will be clearly seen that the Diocese of Paisley and all our agencies, parishes and youth and family initiatives are committed to the safeguarding of our young people and children and to fulfilling the policies, protocols, procedures and guidelines laid down by Scots Law and by the Holy See and the Bishops’ Conference of Scotland.

11. We could create opportunities for senior pupils to meet with elderly members of our parishes, perhaps at a local deanery level that allows the elderly to attend, so that our young can hear the perspectives of our senior members and reflect together with them in mutual trust and respect about the paths for our future.

“The young find Mass boring. We need to find different ways of celebrating it in order to convert them.”

- From Parish Consultation

4.7 The Marginalised



From *Evangelii Gaudium*

God's heart has a special place for the poor, so much so that he himself "became poor" (2 Cor 8:9). The entire history of our redemption is marked by the presence of the poor. Salvation came to us from the "yes" uttered by a lowly maiden from a small town on the fringes of a great empire. The Saviour was born in a manger, in the midst of animals, like children of poor families; he was presented at the Temple along with two turtledoves, the offering made by those who could not afford a lamb (cf. Lk 2:24; Lev 5:7); he was raised in a home of ordinary workers and worked with his own hands to earn his bread. When he began to preach the Kingdom, crowds of the dispossessed followed him, illustrating his words: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor" (Lk 4:18). He assured those burdened by sorrow and crushed by poverty that God has a special place for them in his heart: "Blessed are you poor, yours is the kingdom of God" (Lk 6:20); he made himself one of them: "I was hungry and you gave me food to eat", and he taught them that mercy towards all of these is the key to heaven (cf. Mt 25:5ff.).

For the Church, the option for the poor is primarily a theological category rather than a cultural, sociological, political or philosophical one. God shows the poor "his first mercy". This divine preference has consequences for the faith life of all Christians, since we are called to have "this mind... which was in Jesus Christ" (Phil 2:5). Inspired by this, the Church has made an option for the poor which is understood as a "special form of primacy in the exercise of Christian charity, to which the whole tradition of the Church bears witness". This option – as Benedict XVI has taught – "is implicit in our Christian faith in a God who became poor for us, so as to enrich us with his poverty". This is why I want a Church which is poor and for the poor. They have much to teach us. Not only do they share in the *sensus fidei*, but in their difficulties, they know the suffering Christ. We need to let ourselves be evangelised by them. The new evangelisation is an invitation to acknowledge the saving power at work in their lives and to put them at the centre of the Church's pilgrim way. We are called to find Christ in them, to lend our voice to their causes, but also to be their friends, to listen to them, to speak for them and to embrace the mysterious wisdom which God wishes to share with us through them.

Our commitment does not consist exclusively in activities or programmes of promotion and assistance; what the Holy Spirit mobilises is not an unruly activism, but above all an attentiveness which considers the other "in a certain sense as one with ourselves". This loving attentiveness is the beginning of a true concern for their person which inspires me effectively to seek their good. This entails appreciating the poor in their goodness, in their experience of life, in their

culture, and in their ways of living the faith. True love is always contemplative, and permits us to serve the other not out of necessity or vanity, but rather because he or she is beautiful above and beyond mere appearances: "The love by which we find the other pleasing leads us to offer him something freely". The poor person, when loved, "is esteemed as of great value", and this is what makes the authentic option for the poor differ from any other ideology, from any attempt to exploit the poor for one's own personal or political interest. Only on the basis of this real and sincere closeness can we properly accompany the poor on their path of liberation. Only this will ensure that "in every Christian community the poor feel at home. Would not this approach be the greatest and most effective presentation of the good news of the kingdom?" Without the preferential option for the poor, "the proclamation of the Gospel, which is itself the prime form of charity, risks being misunderstood or submerged by the ocean of words which daily engulfs us in today's society of mass communications".

Since this Exhortation is addressed to members of the Catholic Church, I want to say, with regret, that the worst discrimination which the poor suffer is the lack of spiritual care. The great majority of the poor have a special openness to the faith; they need God and we must not fail to offer them his friendship, his blessing, his word, the celebration of the sacraments and a journey of growth and maturity in the faith. Our preferential option for the poor must mainly translate into a privileged and preferential religious care.

No one must say that they cannot be close to the poor because their own lifestyle demands more attention to other areas. This is an excuse commonly heard in academic, business or professional, and even ecclesial circles. While it is quite true that the essential vocation and mission of the lay faithful is to strive that earthly realities and all human activity may be transformed by the Gospel, none of us can think we are exempt from concern for the poor and for social justice: "Spiritual conversion, the intensity of the love of God and neighbour, zeal for justice and peace, the Gospel meaning of the poor and of poverty, are required of everyone". I fear that these words too may give rise to commentary or discussion with no real practical effect. That being said, I trust in the openness and readiness of all Christians, and I ask you to seek, as a community, creative ways of accepting this renewed call.

Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 197-201

4.7. The Marginalised

4.7.1. Principles

1. **General:** An increasing number of people in our society and local communities have been marginalised or excluded from the material comforts many of us enjoy or are deprived of belonging to a family and faith community. We will identify who they are and discern how we can reach out to them. We want to understand ways we can engage with those on the outside and welcome them into our family. Established societies and groups provide excellent examples and proven vehicles to reach out to those on the periphery.
2. **Who are the marginalised?:** Among others, we are referring to: the materially poor; those vulnerable due to their stage or state of life; those who have become disconnected from the Church and the faith community.
3. **Reaching out to the marginalised:** We hope that the celebration of the Year of Mercy will leave some practical legacy in the heart of our community of faith. We will begin by listening to the needs of the marginalised and thinking of ways of reaching out to them, for example: organising volunteer helpers to visit the sick and housebound and bringing those who are able to Church services; inviting schoolchildren to Children's Masses; holding family social events and organising senior citizen clubs and activities.
4. **Working through existing groups:** Many church groups already exist to reach out to the marginalised in our society. In our own Church, groups including SSVP, SPRED and the Legion of Mary already do sterling work with those in need of a helping hand. We will better publicise these groups in parish and diocesan websites and publish contact information.
5. **Inclusiveness:** We will improve in actively and intentionally welcoming strangers and those unfamiliar with our cultural behaviours. The first face newcomers meet will be a face of mercy and acceptance. This will help us to become more inclusive to all who come to our churches.

4.7.2. Practicalities

6. The Church through the whole parish could have particular focus on meeting the needs of the vulnerable and marginalised in our localities. Parish councils and newly established structures could focus on this. The SSVP and other outreach groups can help parishes reflect on the needs of the vulnerable. We could prioritise these needs. Perhaps we could establish volunteer networks to be available to serve the various needs of the marginalised as they become present, and parish-befriending services for people living alone, or family services for counselling those confused, overwhelmed or uncertain, in order to provide assurance that they are not alone.
7. We could better advertise the work of existing Catholic agencies working with the vulnerable and disenfranchised through parish and diocesan media outlets and local presentations.

"We should open our hands and hearts to welcome immigrants. Our culture and shyness holds us back. Talk to new people and break down barriers."

- From Parish Consultation



4.8 Church Structures



From *Evangelii Gaudium*

I dream of a “missionary option”, that is, a missionary impulse capable of transforming everything, so that the Church’s customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and structures can be suitably channeled for the evangelisation of today’s world rather than for her self-preservation. The renewal of structures demanded by pastoral conversion can only be understood in this light: as part of an effort to make them more mission-oriented, to make ordinary pastoral activity on every level more inclusive and open, to inspire in pastoral workers a constant desire to go forth and in this way to elicit a positive response from all those whom Jesus summons to friendship with him. As John Paul II once said to the Bishops of Oceania: “All renewal in the Church must have mission as its goal if it is not to fall prey to a kind of ecclesial introversion”.

The parish is not an outdated institution; precisely because it possesses great flexibility, it can assume quite different contours depending on the openness and missionary creativity of the pastor and the community. While certainly not the only institution which evangelises, if it proves capable of self-renewal and constant adaptivity, it continues to be “the Church living in the midst of the homes of her sons and daughters”.^[26] This presumes that it really is in contact with the homes and the lives of its people, and does not become a useless structure out of touch with people or a self-absorbed cluster made up of a chosen few. The parish is the presence of the Church in a given territory, an environment for hearing God’s word, for growth in the Christian life, for dialogue, proclamation, charitable outreach, worship and celebration. In all its activities, the parish encourages and trains its members to be evangelisers. It is a community of communities, a sanctuary where the thirsty come to drink in the midst of their journey, and a centre of constant missionary outreach. We must admit, though, that the call to review and renew our parishes has not yet sufficed to bring them nearer to people, to make them environments of living communion and participation, and to make them completely mission-oriented.

Other Church institutions, basic communities and small communities, movements, and forms of association are a source of enrichment for the Church, raised up by the Spirit for evangelising different areas and sectors. Frequently they bring a new evangelising fervour and a new capacity for dialogue with the world whereby the Church is renewed. But it will prove beneficial for them not to lose contact with the rich reality of the local parish and to participate readily in the overall pastoral activity of the particular Church.^[29] This kind of integration will prevent them from concentrating only on part of the Gospel or the Church, or becoming nomads without roots.

Each particular Church, as a portion of the Catholic Church under the leadership of its bishop, is likewise called to missionary conversion. It is the primary subject of evangelisation, since it is the concrete manifestation of the one Church in one specific place, and in it “the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church of Christ is truly present and operative”. It is the Church incarnate in a certain place, equipped with all the means of salvation bestowed by Christ, but with local features. Its joy in communicating Jesus Christ is expressed both by a concern to preach him to areas in greater need and in constantly going forth to the outskirts of its own territory or towards new sociocultural settings. Wherever the need for the light and the life of the Risen Christ is greatest, it will want to be there. To make this missionary impulse ever more focused, generous and fruitful, I encourage each particular Church to undertake a resolute process of discernment, purification and reform.

Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 27-30

4.8. Church Structures

4.8.1. Principles

1. **General:** The existing provision of our parishes and deaneries will be reassessed in terms of the needs of the communities they currently serve. The planning and implementation of clergy and parish changes is an opportunity to explore new models of Church which better fit the communities of the future, rather than the past.
2. **Diocesan support:** Where parishes cannot easily support themselves, deanery and diocesan structures will develop resources and services for them. These will include training and formation on issues from evangelisation to safeguarding. The diocese will be the resource and repository of materials, services and expertise.
3. **Parish councils:** We will renew our commitment to establishing Parish Councils in each parish and to implementing the Diocesan Guidelines that would ensure a wide representation of parishioners, parish groups and communities.
4. **New expressions:** A feature of current parish life includes the maintenance and repair of large old buildings, dwindling congregations and overstretched priests. We will explore new models of Church already existing elsewhere. In particular, resources will focus on people rather than buildings and on growth rather than maintenance. This will require new mechanisms of support at deanery and diocesan level.
5. **The Diocesan family:** The sense of being a diocesan family complements and supports the local parish community. Improved communication and consultation will foster a wider vision of our local and universal Catholic Church, beyond parish life.
6. **Finances:** We will continue to develop ways of ensuring that our finances at parish and diocesan level are open and transparent. Financial consideration will continue to be given to parishes in need and to diocesan initiatives that help the renewal of our local church. Lay people with expertise will continue to be employed in managing the fabric and finances of parish and diocesan property.

4.8.2. Practicalities

7. We could provide opportunities to explore and enhance the structure of parishes. This may mean merging, clustering or closing parishes. An open meeting with the bishop and parish priests in parishes and deaneries could explore the future of each building, especially if the parishes are in debt, to assess if it is better to invest financial resources in other ways.
8. It would be useful to establish a commission to explore the structure of parishes, deaneries and the diocese. As part of its work this commission might assist in examining the possibility of restructuring parish boundaries.
9. We could offer opportunities for times for prayer and reflection to discern answers to diocesan questions. An annual diocesan service could give thanks and pray about current issues and establish deanery and diocesan calendars of opportunities to pray, reflect and discern diocesan matters.
10. We might suggest ways for parishes to be involved in discerning the way forward for the diocese.
11. We could collate a diocesan directory of skills, activities and groups.
12. We could ensure wider membership of parish councils.
13. We could look at the implications for paying people for work and services for the diocese and look at the principle and implications of appropriately-qualified laity being employed to carry out work and services for the diocese. It would need an in-depth cost/benefit analysis and would need to consider new streams of funding. This may be a question both for the laity and for the bishop and priests who seek professional advice on issues of finance.



4.9 Welcoming Communities



From *Evangelii Gaudium*

The parish is not an outdated institution; precisely because it possesses great flexibility, it can assume quite different contours depending on the openness and missionary creativity of the pastor and the community.

While certainly not the only institution which evangelises, if it proves capable of self-renewal and constant adaption, it continues to be “the Church living in the midst of the homes of her sons and daughters”. This presumes that it really is in contact with the homes and the lives of its people, and does not become a useless structure out of touch with people or a self-absorbed cluster made up of a chosen few.

The parish is the presence of the Church in a given territory, an environment for hearing God’s word, for growth in the Christian life, for dialogue, proclamation, charitable outreach, worship and celebration.

In all its activities the parish encourages and trains its members to be evangelisers. It is a community of communities, a sanctuary where the thirsty come to drink in the midst of their journey, and a centre of constant missionary outreach. We must admit, though, that the call to review and renew our parishes has not yet sufficed to bring them nearer to people, to make them environments of living communion and participation, and to make them completely mission-oriented.

Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, no. 28

“Pope Benedict particularly emphasised the apostolate of education as the gateway to enriching Scottish civic life and culture.”

4.9.1. Principles

1. **More Welcoming:** We desire to be more welcoming to those who are already members of our parish as well as to those who are new. We want to be more welcoming to families and those in our wider communities who are only loosely connected with our faith community, such as our own family members, the old and infirm, those disenchanted with the Church, and those who have no church connection. The parish will be a place where all are welcome and feel welcome: the old and young, the families, and our brothers and sisters who find themselves on the margins of our communities.
2. **Building Community:** A welcoming community requires the active participation of everyone. Many opportunities exist to support and welcome new members into the parish community and a special effort will be made at the celebration of baptisms, weddings and funerals when there may be a sizeable number of people present who are not familiar with the Church or who have ceased to be regular Church members.
3. **Celebration of Faith:** The celebration of our faith as a family-in-faith builds up our community and welcomes others into it. Welcome involves an inclusive spirit, open and accepting to people of all faiths and none, and an ecumenical approach which cherishes relationships with other churches and Christian communities as brothers and sisters in Christ.
4. **Evangelisation and Ecumenism:** The Second Vatican Council had the encouragement of unity among Christians as one of its principle aims. In the years since the Council we have made tremendous progress in our relations with our brothers and sisters in the other churches and ecclesial communities present in our country and in our diocese. We know that the residue of Protestant – Catholic disrespect still needs to be finally overcome. As parishes at the heart of our local communities we must be more explicit in making clear that we welcome people of all faiths and none. We have shared Gospel issues that we can work on together. We look to other Christian churches and communities for inspiration and example. They have founded themselves on love of the Scriptures which has transformed their ordinary

members into prophetic leaders of the local community who take the initiative to speak out. They have developed successful family-friendly worship. Now is also the time for engaging evangelical communities who are strong and growing. They give hope to the hopeless and they help us to understand how our Catholic faith must be born again, time and time over.

“Attitudes can put the young off. They are put off when they see or hear judgemental attitudes.”

– From Parish Consultation

4.9.2. Practicalities

5. We could establish a welcoming ministry in each parish and seek ways to collect and share parish information with and from new parishioners.
6. We could benchmark good practice locally and abroad regarding welcome ministries.
7. It might be helpful to encourage and begin more 'Open Door Days' to share our communities with others beyond ourselves. We will, however, have some idea what we are trying to achieve with these. Perhaps we could open parish activities to the wider community and create awareness of our parish community through local advertising, leafleting and annual 'Welcome Sundays'. We could also seek opportunities to share our experiences with other churches and communities.
8. We want to catechise our own community with renewed respect for the Church as the House of God and the place of Christ's Presence, above all in the Blessed Sacrament.
9. Seasonal liturgies, family friendly liturgies, reconciliation services and opportunities for recollection and retreat put Christ and the Holy Spirit at the centre of our life and actions.

With regards to Ecumenism

10. We encourage our Priests and deacons to establish, re-establish or continue contact with clergy from the various Christian denominations and faith groups which exist in our diocese. There are Gospel issues and issues of charity, justice and peace on which we can work together. We should seek to build connections with other churches and faith communities, perhaps convoking multi-church and even multi-faith assemblies a few times a year.
11. We look forward to developing the already-existing links we have with other churches through shared social events and in creating these links where they do not already exist.
12. Perhaps, where appropriate, we may even share buildings for worship across churches and communities.

4.10

Communication, Language & Style



From *Evangelii Gaudium*

If we attempt to put all things in a missionary key, this will also affect the way we communicate the message. In today's world of instant communication and occasionally biased media coverage, the message we preach runs a greater risk of being distorted or reduced to some of its secondary aspects. In this way certain issues which are part of the Church's moral teaching are taken out of the context which gives them their meaning.

The biggest problem is when the message we preach then seems identified with those secondary aspects which, important as they are, do not in and of themselves convey the heart of Christ's message.

We need to be realistic and not assume that our audience understands the full background to what we are saying, or is capable of relating what we say to the very heart of the Gospel which gives it meaning, beauty and attractiveness.

Pastoral ministry in a missionary style is not obsessed with the disjointed transmission of a multitude of doctrines to be insistently imposed. When we adopt a pastoral goal and a missionary style which would actually reach everyone without exception or exclusion, the message has to concentrate on the essentials,

on what is most beautiful, most grand, most appealing and at the same time most necessary. The message is simplified, while losing none of its depth and truth, and thus becomes all the more forceful and convincing.

All revealed truths derive from the same divine source and are to be believed with the same faith, yet some of them are more important for giving direct expression to the heart of the Gospel.

In this basic core, what shines forth is the beauty of the saving love of God made manifest in Jesus Christ who died and rose from the dead. In this sense, the Second Vatican Council explained, "in Catholic doctrine there exists an order or a 'hierarchy' of truths, since they vary in their relation to the foundation of the Christian faith".

This holds true as much for the dogmas of faith as for the whole corpus of the Church's teaching, including her moral teaching.

Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 34-36

"There are many temptations placed before you every day - drugs, money, sex, pornography, alcohol - which the world tells you will bring you happiness, yet these things are destructive and divisive."

4.10. Communication, Language & Style

4.10.1. Principles

1. **General:** Communication is fundamental to the Church in the modern era. The message, the medium and the language are central; to promoting the Gospel message of peace and reconciliation, to standing up for the truth in a secular environment, and to building up our home, parish and diocesan communities.
2. **Media quality:** We will develop our use of the media in all its forms. We will continue to improve the content of our parish bulletins, parish and diocesan websites, social media and ad hoc communications to ensure that the content is credible, the format appealing and the purpose clear. The language used is important and will reflect the target audience. This applies to our Catholic communities and to audiences less familiar with specifically Catholic words and expressions.
3. **Media as key to Evangelisation:** Modern media will be used to reach out to those in our communities not connected to a community of faith. The language used will always be welcoming, accessible and non-judgemental.
4. **Speaking the Truth:** As a prophetic people we are called to speak the truth in love to our modern society that is in so much need of our message of hope. We will seek to form leaders who are faith-filled, competent and eloquent and who have confidence to stand up for the truth. It is our hope that all of Christ's faithful will grow in confidence through encouragement and formation in order to be more able to witness to their faith.

4.10.2. Practicalities

5. We propose that we could establish a communications and marketing group of lay faithful with a remit to improve the quality of communications and media throughout the diocese. It might be helpful to issue a monthly diocesan newsletter which highlights news and updates on current diocesan initiatives.
6. We can help our communities to grow and develop by good communication at diocesan and parish level. This could be done by: publicising parish and diocesan events; synchronising parish and diocesan schedules; sharing best practice across the diocese; and creating directories and links to good source material on current topics.
7. It would be useful to investigate different media possibilities to record and share diocesan events including talks, liturgies and Masses.
8. We might enlist the help of existing agencies working in the media, (e.g., Catholic Voices), to give training to a wider group of lay people. The diocesan website could be a useful resource of Catholic materials with links to established Catholic websites.

General remarks

1. The many proposals will not cause us to lose sight of our principal themes of empowering the laity and evangelisation. Some proposals, moreover, are obvious and we will be aware of priorities and not avoid the more challenging proposals.
2. Delegates will realise that they need to volunteer to put the Synod resolutions into effect both as advisors of its strategy and as workers carrying out its mission.
3. They could be included in running areas of mission and evangelisation or lay apostolate or as liaisons. As well as the resolutions passed by delegates, every area of diocesan life will proceed in the light of the Synod's conclusions so we also will find new blood to come alongside delegates in order to get the most comprehensive view of the diocese going forward.
4. Prayer is referred to first in the Charter in terms of the need for everyone to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and to live a life filled with faith, hope and charity. The spirit of the Synod is that we can only implement the proposals if we truly are, first and foremost, a diocese of prayer.

*“Evangelisation
doesn't need theology.
We just need to
know Christ. It is
about talking about
Jesus to others.”*

- From Parish Consultation

4.10.3. Decree of the Rt. Rev. John Keenan, Bishop of Paisley, declaring the Synod Closed.



John, Bishop of Paisley Decree Concluding the First Diocesan Synod

To the greater glory of God and for the good of souls,
I John, Bishop of Paisley, do hereby declare closed the
proceedings of the First Diocesan Synod of the Diocese
of Paisley.

I give thanks to God for the work accomplished by so
many of the Lay Faithful, our Religious and Clergy in the
preparation and celebration of our Diocesan Synod.

The work of implementation of the Synod now begins
and I appoint the Reverend Monsignor Denis Canon
Carlin, Moderator of the Synod, to oversee the
establishment of our **post Synodal Commissions**.

I direct that we establish a central **Co-ordinating
Commission**, with its Secretariat, to co-ordinate this
work and to ensure liaison, through the Vicar General
and the Diocesan Chancellor, with the appropriate offices
of the Diocesan Curia in seeking information or advice
and in reporting the Commission's practical conclusions
for the future pastoral governance of the Diocese.

I also direct that the **Council of Priests** should be kept
informed and be appropriately consulted about the work
of the post Synodal Commissions

I further direct the establishment of the necessary
Synodal Commissions to provide practical proposals
for the pastoral and administrative implementation of
the Principles formulated and agreed at the Synod and
subsequently accepted by the Bishop as required by
canon 466 of the Code of Canon Law.

These Synodal Commissions shall study the following
themes, arising from the proceedings of the Synod:

- On the Sacred Liturgy
- On Evangelisation
- On Formation
- On Collaborative Ministry
- On Marriage & Family Life
- On Youth
- On The Marginalised
- On Structures
- On Creating & Sustaining Welcoming Communities
- On Communication

I decree that these Commissions should have prepared
their Preliminary Reports by 23rd June 2017, that is to say,
one year from the date of the Closing Mass of the Synod.

I invite the whole People of God who constitute our
Diocese to pray for the success of our post-Synod
process and to participate fully in the implementation of
our Synodal Principles at Diocesan, Parish and local level.

I invoke once more the intercession of **Mary, Mother
of the Church**, under her title of **Our Lady of Paisley**,
and of **St Mirin**, the Patron of our Diocese and the first
Evangeliser of our people.

Given at Paisley on the 23rd June 2016, at the Closing
Mass of our Diocesan Synod.

Rt. Rev. John Keenan.
Bishop of Paisley.
Chancellor

Rev Eoin Patten

Laus Deo Semper

“We have to be
very happy and
joyful in our faith.
A smile passes
on a message.”

- From Parish Consultation

"She was a nomad, everyday girl, and possibly a normal everyday saint. Chiara's brief life showed us how much one person can accomplish in God's name."



5. Appendices



5.1 Preparing our Synod

5.1.1. Address to the Assembly of Clergy by the Rt. Rev. John Keenan, Bishop of Paisley, Introducing the Synod

1. I asked you to meet in Deanery groups to discuss my proposal for a diocesan synod and to offer me your opinion and advice. I am grateful for the feedback which has been very helpful. I asked your advice on two matters. Firstly, as to whether the instrument of a synod was a good means of providing for the ongoing renewal of our diocese in the years ahead and, secondly, as to whether the themes of the role of the laity and the new evangelisation were the best subjects to consider.
2. As to the first, the idea of a diocesan synod, in summary, the deaneries were all in favour to a more or less extent. One was in favour, another very positive in general and another positive overall. All of the deaneries had some qualifications. There was anxiety as to its formality, having to have canonical legal status and the question was raised as to whether our renewal process could be done less formally. Another warned that the people were now going to expect some immediate practical results and the synod was too far away in the future to realise these. On the other hand, the very formality of the synod was attractive to some and seen as a way of raising the bar and moving on from issues that have just been going round and around. Moreover the instrument of synods was how the Church envisaged the normal way of planning for ongoing diocesan renewal.
3. As to the themes of lay involvement and evangelisation, one deanery thought you could not quibble with these themes. Another agreed that the subject matter was a priority. But another fed back that in order for our people to embrace the themes of the role of the laity and the new evangelisation they will need a lot of catechetical formation. Another deanery added that this raised the question of the education of the laity in its broadest terms. We now have several generations of uncatechised teachers and parents and these need catechised too. One advised that our people have their own expectations as to what lay involvement means and we will need to form them in the Church's understanding of it. It will also involve giving quite big roles to some laity in the synodal process and this would need a strong structure to ensure good order. In that context one deanery worried that a misguided empowerment of laity might lead to clericalisation of the laity.
4. As to new evangelisation, one deanery noted that this meant a Church which was genuinely counter-cultural. But there are significant obstacles in our path. Our priests are generally caring but suffer very bad press. Parishes are already involved in social outreach but this gets little recognition. Our Church in Scotland is living in a time of social and political upheaval but this could also be a positive for us if we can become voices or visionaries in the call for change. People are asking deep questions so is this a providential time? Certainly we need to be involved in the world and its evangelisation as a Gospel imperative. Christ calls us to accompany people and so we have to be there for our people and be seen to be on our people's side. One deanery called for us to focus on schools. Teachers need to be formed and currently there is a difficulty in finding teachers who are fervent in the Faith. They further asked whether we need to give more priority to formation for evangelisation and to mastering the skills and knowledge needed to do with evangelisation. Do we need to establish our own diocesan or national college for evangelisation?
5. Following the deanery meetings, I met with the Council of Priests where we carried on the discussion to good effect. Again the formality of a synod seemed threatening and may create a burden. People were already asking what we actually do now and, getting down to practical skills, what's involved in a synod? Some priests were not sure why we needed a synod or what it was hoping to achieve. There was a feeling that the synod needed to be very well-prepared and so we should concentrate on being prepared before setting a date for the final synodal assembly. On the other hand, it was pointed out that the rules of synods demand good preparation and organisation and this is exactly what allows them to produce promising results. It also demands good preparation of and consultation with priests which is important

since no renewal is successful unless bought into by the clergy. In fact, the diocesan priests have to really want a synod for renewal. They have to be convinced that the amount of time they are going to spend on it will benefit the growth of their own parish and ministry. This means that meetings have to be seen as really meaningful and bringing about real change rather than being mere talking shops. Another suggested, in favour of a synod and the full consultation it required, that in the past, when decisions have been left only with those in charge, the Church has not always made best decisions. It has asset stripped our patrimony, it has left us with no retreat centre for the young, no replacement for Scotus as higher education, the closure of St. Andrews College of Education and no adequate replacement, so there is a lot to be said for wide consultation in big matters with the clergy and lay faithful.

6. Feedback was reported from some priests regarding the open meetings the bishop had with the people. It was reported that they went well but that frustrations were raised which raised the question as to what place these should be given in recording the synod acts. Some frustrations were in matters that a diocesan synod cannot address, like communion for divorced. So there is a danger of raising expectations we cannot fulfil and it was advised that the content and expectations have to be managed appropriately without seeking to control the process. Another, on the other hand, considered that the very narrowness of the parameters we are allowed, dealing with only local matters, could make the synod more attractive since it is dealing with things in which we have real possibility of making big changes. One pointed out the very narrow profile of those who attended the open meetings, elderly parishioners and the 'usual suspects'. So, further consultation has to be much smarter in order to engage those disenfranchised Catholics whose views are essential to evangelisation and renewal. One thought that it was here that the benefit of a synod might best be seen because its canonical process demands a wide and lengthy stage of consultation and catechesis. It is required to seek the opinions of all groups and individuals in its responses, to allow for group meetings as well as individual letters, and so demands we use our imagination as to how to reach all people.

7. There was a worry that the themes of laity and evangelisation, were too general and we might need to think of giving priority to some areas over others. Another suggested that we need to look, firstly, at how missionary and, secondly, how countercultural we are. A good example and challenge for us is the Legion of Mary. One Legion PPC to a parish visited 3000 homes and got 14 good replies resulting in 10 coming to RCIA. We, as a diocese cannot just attend to those who come while those who do not come are hungry for something. Another added that the good thing about synod is its ecclesiology. It draws the local church together in order to send it out. It is communion and mission. But both need to be in balance. We are good at communion but not good at mission. So, we are limping. Another thought we have to do a lot of work in order to form the content and subject matter of laity and evangelisation. Should we directly ask those who do not come why they do not come and see what they say? It may be interesting to put the ball in their court and see what they say. A few thought this a good idea but that we should be positive and encouraging and invite them to tell us what they see wrong and we will try to fix it. One speculated that the reasons why many do not come are simple. It is because there are so many things to do instead and Mass is seen from the prism of personal freedom. Catholics do not see it as an obligation. The idea of fear is totally gone. It is good it is gone but it has not been replaced by anything like how great it is to be at Mass. Maybe we need to challenge our people as to why do they want to get married in the Church or have their children baptised. When young people were asked why they did not go to Mass their answers were interesting. They were working on Sunday or, when they were little, no one had ever taken them or they had been hurt by the Church or let down by God. But they were grateful for having been asked the question.

8. **Bishop's Thoughts:** First of all, we get the idea of Synods from Scripture. Coming from this source it is a holy and grace-filled process. We find a forerunner of synods employed in the Scriptures, in the fifteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, when there was the question of how Jewish the Church had to be. There, as you know, it was decided that Gentile converts to Christianity were

5. Appendices

not obliged to keep most of the Law of Moses, including the rules concerning circumcision of males. Synods and councils have been regarded as formal developments of this Council of Jerusalem and so as instruments tied up in some way with the grace of revelation. In short, they are God's way, if you like, of moving the Church forward. In that sense, I find a synod attractive in that we are using a method inspired by the Lord Himself and can hope for it to be a holy process, filled with grace and promise. The point is that the process is not first about searching for our own good ideas but about seeking God's grace and discerning His vision.

9. Synods are canonical and involve following a well worked-out procedure. But I do not see this firstly as an obstacle but as a help. The canons of the Church summarise many years and generations of the wisdom of ecclesial experience. They are the calm fruit of a lot of trial and error and gather up the collective experience of what has worked best for the Church over the ages and so are intended to help a diocese avoid making the same mistakes or re-inventing the wheel.
10. As was mentioned in the deanery feedback, the very scale of a synod does raise expectations and standards and this can only be a good thing in order to bring about the kind of step change we need. The rather momentous nature of it will hopefully also allow us to close one chapter of our recent history and begin another. Our Church - priests and people - have been through a trying generation. The synod gives us an opportunity to stop and reflect and learn, to then draw a line under some things of the past, and to embrace the future with fresh zeal and a fresh start.
11. Being canonical, it also regulates the role and authority of the bishop so that he too has to abide by the canonical process and I like that. It is good for our humility, trust and patience. Synods are consultative and catechetical and both these are important. It is essential that we listen as well as possible to all the voices that count, not just the loudest ones, and the process requires we listen to those who have not been heard. As catechetical, it includes the formation of the laity so they can be enlightened participants in the mission of the

Church. Synods are deliberative and legislative. I think it will be good for us, after consultation and agreement, to bring binding force at the level of vision and general principles which have been arrived at by common consent of the People of God and under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. This clarifies and concentrates our minds going forward and allows us to make good resolutions for renewal.

12. Finally, I know that the scale of a synod has made many take a deep breath because it seems to be an instrument for fundamental change. When I first came to you as bishop, I had read and been convinced by *Evangelii Gaudium's* call for renewal. There Pope Francis introduced us into the idea that *Evangelii Gaudium's* vision of pastoral and missionary conversion has programmatic significance and important consequences for the Church.

We cannot leave things as they presently are. Mere administration can no longer be enough. Universally we must be permanently in a state of mission. But there are ecclesial structures which can hamper evangelisation and, because of this, ecclesial renewal cannot be deferred. This renewal will be characterised by an orientation towards a 'missionary option', a missionary impulse capable of driving everything so that the Church's ways of doing things, its language and structures, are channelled for the evangelisation of today's world rather than for her self-preservation.

13. Francis insisted that 'each diocese must undertake a resolute process of discernment, purification and reform'. Throughout *Evangelii Gaudium* we sense the Pope's urgent insistence on this renewal.

Missionary spirit goes beyond the attitude that says, "we have always done it this way" and I invite everyone to be bold and creative in rethinking the goals, structures, styles and methods of evangelisation in their particular communities, and encourage everyone to apply the guidelines of the apostolic exhortation generously and courageously, without inhibition or fear.

14. But his vision, if urgent and challenging, is equally inspiring and liberating.

A missionary heart is aware of the limits of our struggling world and makes itself weak with the weak, everything for everyone. It never closes off, never retreats into its own insecurity, never opts for rigidity and defensiveness. It does what good it can, even if in the process its shoes get soiled by the mud of the street. He says, "I prefer a Church that is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets rather than a Church which is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security", and he goes on, "We should be moved less by fear of going astray and more by fear of remaining trapped in structures that give a false sense of security, within rules that make us harsh judges, within habits that make us feel safe while at our door people are starving and Jesus does not tire of saying to us: Give them something to eat."

15. It was with the sense that fundamental change is in fact what is needed for our country of Scotland that I addressed the diocese at my Ordination Mass I said:

These are challenging times for the Church and times of big cultural changes in our society. The former structures of our Church are creaking but only to open up new and better opportunities for the Gospel. We cannot dwell in the past but have to look forward with confidence and be bold, courageous and creative before the challenges that are opening up. Coinciding with my ordination day we celebrate the first anniversary of Pope Francis' inauguration. In Francis, the Holy Spirit has given us a Shepherd full of joy and hope. He has shown us how to live the Gospel radically and with humanity, mercy and joy. And his living witness of the Gospel has been given a global welcome beyond anyone's wildest expectations. The world's response to His papacy has shown how people are hungering and thirsting for the faith when it is lived full of hope. We are in the hands of the Holy Spirit. We are armed with His power and His alone. He guides us and never abandons us. Together we follow Him. We live in him and share him with others with the conviction that the joy of gospel will change the hearts and minds people today and win our world to the Gospel again.

It is with the same conviction that I am welcoming you together with me to lead our people in the grace of a synodal journey for a new evangelisation of our diocese.

"Evangelical churches set up creative ways to bring Christ alive for children. We can learn from them."

- From Parish Consultation

5. Appendices

5.1.2



John, Bishop of Paisley Decree Convoing the First Diocesan Synod

To the greater glory of God and for the good of souls,
I John, Bishop of Paisley, having consulted the Council of Priests as required by canon 461§1 of the Code of Canon Law, do hereby convoke the First Diocesan Synod of the Diocese of Paisley.

**The principal theme of our Synod will be
The Role of the Lay Faithful in the New
Evangelisation.**

I appoint the Reverend Brian McGee, Vicar General of the Diocese, as **Moderator of the Synod** and direct him to establish the Synod Co-ordinating Commission and the Synod Secretariat and to draft the Synod Directory. The Moderator shall also ensure the constitution of the membership of the Synod in accordance with canon 463 of the Code of Canon Law and shall supervise the drawing up of the Agenda of the Synod based on our process of consultation in preparation for the Synod.

I decree that the **Opening Mass of the Synod** will be celebrated in our Cathedral Church of St Mirin in Paisley on Tuesday 19th April 2016. The **Opening Session of the Synod** will be celebrated in Notre Dame High School in Greenock on Saturday 23rd April 2016 with the subsequent sessions to be held on 7th May, 21st May, 4th June and 18th June as required by the progress of the Synod. The **Closing Mass of the Synod** will be celebrated in the Cathedral Church of St Mirin in Paisley on Thursday 23rd June 2016.

I invite the whole People of God who constitute our Diocese to pray for the success of our Synod and to participate fully in the Synod process.

I place our Synod under the protection, and I invoke the intercession, of **Mary, Mother of the Church**, under her title of **Our Lady of Paisley**, and of **St Mirin**, the Patron of our Diocese and the first Evangeliser of our people.

Given at Paisley, 16th November 2015,
The Feast of St Margaret of Scotland.

Rt. Rev. John Keenan
Bishop of Paisley.
Chancellor

Rev Eoin Patten

Laus Deo Semper

5.1.3 Pastoral Letter by the Rt. Rev. John Keenan, Bishop of Paisley, on the Feast of St Margaret, 16th November 2014, announcing the Convocation of the Diocesan Synod.

1. My dear brothers and sisters,

Today, in this celebration of Holy Mass in St. Mirin's Cathedral on the Feast of St. Margaret of Scotland, I have the joy of announcing to you, the people of the diocese of Paisley, the convocation of a Diocesan Synod to be held in Eastertide 2016.

2. A Diocesan Synod brings together with the bishop his priests, deacons, religious and laity. They gather together in prayer and discussion to discern and plan the ongoing renewal and building up of the Church for the years ahead.
3. In today's Gospel, Jesus reminds his disciples that he personally chose each of them and commissioned them to go out and bear fruit. Our own Synod's purpose is to help us discern together the role of the laity in our Lord's commission to His Church to bring forth the fruits of evangelisation. As you already know, it is my own firm belief and hope that this process will lead to a renewal of our Diocese.
4. I have chosen deliberately to convoke the Synod on the Feast of St. Margaret. St. Margaret was, herself, a member of the lay faithful and her passionate and thoughtful dedication to Christ brought about a great reform of the Church and lasting renewal of the Gospel in Scotland. Already as a young woman Margaret began the regeneration of the Faith by committing herself to the care of the poor, the education of the young, the beauty of the liturgy, and the welcoming of new religious communities to our country. So, Margaret is a fine example and inspiration to us of what God can achieve through the lay faithful. Along with St. Mirin, I have made St. Margaret a co-patron of our Synod, which we place above all under the guidance, protection and intercession of Our Lady of Paisley.
5. I am meeting with the clergy at the beginning of December to begin our planning of the Synod. In due course, you will be more fully informed of what a Synod involves. However, today, in making this announcement to you, I know I can rely on your good support as I encourage you actively to engage in the Synod's progress at all levels.

6. Please join me in prayer for the success of the Synod as we implore the protection, guidance and intercession of the Blessed Mother, our own Our Lady of Paisley.

Yours devotedly in Christ,

+John
Bishop of Paisley

"Gianna and her husband, Pietro, taught their children that their Catholic faith was the most important thing in their lives."

5.2 Opening the Synod

5.2.1. Synod Opening Mass: Homily by the Rt. Rev. John Keenan, Bishop of Paisley

Dear brothers and sisters,

1. Welcome to this Opening Mass of *Our Paisley Synod*. Those words are sweet on the lips and honey on the tongue. After much effort and preparation we have reached this auspicious moment in the life of the diocese and, at this stage, I want to thank all the members of our Preparatory Commission – not forgetting Bishop Brian who got us up and running, and Mgr. Carlin who took over the reins - for their faithful commitment, especially those who have worked long hours, right up to the last minute, in organising our Synod events. I want to thank our clergy, their parishes and parish liaisons for their generous promotion of Our Synod at the local level of our diocese where it matters most, as well as all those who took part in Catechesis and Consultation meetings around our diocese. Finally, a special thanks to our Delegates here this evening who have accepted the call to be our representatives and have thereby taken on such momentous responsibility.
2. Convening a diocesan synod is a way of spiritually re-founding a diocese, and opening up a new and hopeful chapter in our life and history. But, before it is about changing things, it must be about changing ourselves. Above all any diocesan synod aims to help us rediscover our identity as God's people. So my first hope for *Our Synod* is that every one of us – clergy, religious and laity - will recognise in *Our Paisley Synod* an invitation from the Holy Spirit to begin our vocation anew, this time as an even more wonderful recreation of the mercy of God. God's first dream from any synod is for each one of us to be personally re-conformed to his Son and for us all together, as a diocese, to become radiant icons of Our Lord, Jesus Christ.
3. From Her earliest days, our Church has come together in Synod, invoking the Holy Spirit in prayer to help us understand who we are and rediscover our mission amid the challenges of our times. In the Acts of the Apostles, we read about the first Synod when the whole Church gathered to work out whether it was to remain within the confines of the Jewish religion or be opened to the whole world. It was a moment of crisis, a crossroads for the Church but, in prayer and dialogue, they discovered *what seemed good to them and the Holy Spirit*. The resolutions of that Synod brought the Church beyond that crisis and changed the course of history such that the little community became the Universal Catholic Church of which we are a part today.
4. Ever since then the Church has enjoyed the benefit of coming together in Synod: of the bishop together with his clergy and people to help him govern his diocese. Like most Synods, *Our Synod*, after consultation, dialogue and discernment, will issue decrees that bind the whole people of our diocese in a common vision as to how to bring about the fullest participation of our laity in the life and mission of our diocese for the generation ahead.
5. Today your bishop has lost his voice. I apologise that I am a bit croaky. But I see in this an eloquent sign of what is at hand in this moment of *Our Synod*. During it – and in the times to come - our bishop speaks a little less so that the People of God can speak a lot. At the time of the birth of Jesus, the father of John the Baptist, the priest Zachariah, was struck dumb so that his wife Elizabeth, a lay woman, could be moved by the Spirit and cry out His prophetic word and so the Good News began to be preached.
6. *Our Synod* reminds us that the Holy Spirit speaks through the whole body of Christ - clergy, religious and lay faithful, men and women, young and old, married or single, rich and poor, sick and marginalised – and not just through the bishop. When we were baptised and confirmed, the Holy Spirit came down upon each of us with the gifts of courage, knowledge and wisdom, so that when the whole Church gathers with its talents, hopes and fears, then the same Holy Spirit is present. In *Our Synod*, He will surely come to guide and strengthen us to face the challenges of our times.
7. Now a word to our Delegates. You are taking on a sacred responsibility. Please do so without fear and with trust that the Lord will be close to you to guide and support you. The First Reading shows the

- attitude you bring to *Our Synod*. Moses tells the people to *strive to obey the LORD God, observing His decrees and to turn to the LORD God with all their heart*. So you are not coming to *Our Synod* to say what you think but to listen to the Lord and ask Him to put His prophetic words in your hearts and on your lips. Enter *Our Synod* process through prayer, contemplation, and little daily sacrifices and God's word reassures you your task will be *not too hard for you*. You soon know what it is to listen for the stirrings of the Holy Spirit and find *His word very near you; in your mouth and in your heart for you to observe*.
8. The Gospel reminds you that part of your task is to correct what is wrong. *Where the members of the Church have gone wrong you must point out this fault*. In *Our Synod* you must have the courage to speak the truth to the whole Church. *Our Synod* cannot avoid its responsibility to be a forum of honest correction.
 9. Yet, in the Second Reading, St. Paul reminds us that *Our Synod* should be, above all, a place of encouragement in Christ, of consolation in love and sharing in the Spirit so as to be a great outpouring of compassion to make our joy complete.
 10. So, as well as urging you to be courageous, to have the *parrhesia* of the Holy Spirit, I appeal to you to try to keep the unity of our diocese in your hearts and minds. St. Paul's advice cannot be improved. He says to us: *Be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit but, in humility, regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests but to the interests of others*.
 11. In the Gospel, the Lord Jesus reveals to us the remarkable fruit of such communion. Not only will our decrees have authority in our diocese but they will have weight in Heaven itself, *"Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in Heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven"*. Jesus goes on to assure us that *when our Church is agreed on anything, it will be done by His Father in heaven because where we gather in His name, He Himself will be there among us*.
 12. For *Our Synod* to yield fruit much depends on how well we apply the conclusions we have reached in our parishes and groups, under the guidance of our clergy. Our post-Synod phase will require just as much care and I trust the whole people of our diocese to carry our resolutions into effect with patience and courage, with creativity and faithfulness, in the months and years to come.
 13. We have already spoken on the first synod of the Church mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles. But there was another gathering even before that, at the very beginnings of the Church, when the community *devoted itself to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus*. This gathering with Mary brought an outpouring of the Holy Spirit in which *they were filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke to their fellow citizen in a language they could understand and welcome. The same Spirit brought them together in common life where the Church even sold its goods to distribute to those in need. Day by day, they spent much time together in prayer and Eucharist, eating with glad and generous hearts, praising God and winning the goodwill of all. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved*.
 14. We pray for the same Mother of God and Our Lady of Paisley to unite with us in prayer for a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit and a fresh flourishing of our diocese for the new evangelisation of our nation. Now is the time of favour. This is the day of salvation. Arise let us be on our way.

5.3 Closing the Synod

5.3.1. Synod Closing Mass

Homily by the Rt. Rev. John Keenan, Bishop of Paisley

Scriptures: Ezechiel 36:24-28, I will give you a new heart;
1 Pet 2:4-10, Living stones in a spiritual house.
John 15:1-8, I am the vine you are the branches.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

1. *You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people who have been chosen to proclaim His mighty deeds, Who called you out of darkness into His own marvellous light.*
2. My first thoughts this evening, as we close our Paisley Synod, are of gratitude. God has been with us on our journey as our Vine and we have remained close to Him as *His branches*. Our Synod has been founded on prayer, sincere prayer from the heart with Our Lady of Paisley, for the Holy Spirit to guide us and for Her Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, to be the *Cornerstone* upon Whom we found ourselves secure, the *True Vine* from Whose grace we might bear fruit that remains.
3. As well as to the Blessed Trinity and Mary our Mother, my gratitude is to you, God's Holy People, for responding so ardently and with such generosity and faithfulness to this call of the Holy Spirit to our diocese in our times. I thank you, my brother priests, for making such an effort to be close to our people and accompany them on this journey. Your presence filled them with encouragement and hope. I thank you, our sister religious and brother deacons, for your enduring prayer for the success of our adventure. I thank you, our lay faithful especially, who have gathered around me, listened attentively, spoken frankly, and hoped with me for a renewal of our diocese. I thank in a particular way our delegates who came together and lived in Synod like the early Church in the Upper Room, in fraternity, in prayer with Mary and in hope for a mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit. I cannot pass on without expressing my profound thanks, firstly to the Preparatory Commission and Secretariat who gave life, flesh and bones to this inspiration of the Holy Spirit and, finally, to our Sessions and Organising Group whose extraordinary teamwork, skill and commitment brought us safely and surely to this remarkable fulfilment.
4. *Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches.* In the Book of Revelations, Saint John had a vision in which the Holy Spirit called him to dictate letters to be sent out to seven dioceses. They amounted to a spiritual audit to show them where they were doing well, where they had grown stale, where they needed refreshed and always offered a path of renewal. In our Synod, I am convinced the Holy Spirit has been speaking to us and that we listened and really heard His Word. I hope you see our post-Synod document with this supernatural outlook too, not just as the accomplishment of our people but, above all, as the Work of God to be continued in our diocese in the many years to come. Throughout our Synod He has *put His spirit in us. May He now make us follow His statutes and perseveringly observe His ordinances.*
5. He has shown us what it really means to be His disciples. He has founded this on our better understanding of the first sacrament we all received, the sacrament of Baptism. He has revealed to us how this sacrament is more essential to our identity than whether we are priests or laity, religious or married, deacons, teachers, young people or parents. It is baptism that establishes in each of us a personal relationship with God and makes us brothers and sisters, with *hearts of flesh*, to welcome each other in equal dignity as children of God. It is by baptism that our Heavenly Father gives us our spiritual gifts and talents and instils in all of us equally the full responsibility for building up our Church and being evangelisers of our villages, towns and nation. It is in the baptism of every new child that God gives our parishes *new heart* and it is in the return of each of us to the grace of our own baptism in daily prayer that God gives our diocese a *new spirit*. Since all of this is true it must follow that all of us, priests and people, should work together in full, collaborative engagement on the basis of this, our common baptismal vocation. In such companionship alone we will rediscover with joy that our Church really is *chosen and precious in God's sight*.
6. In the Synod the Holy Spirit has revealed to us, too, that, in order to lead lives worthy of our vocation as active disciples we need a new formation in faith. Jesus called His disciples to *repent* in order to *believe in the Good News* and the Scriptures this evening

remind us that formation first means purification, to be *cleansed from any uncleanness and from any idols*. It is only natural to assume some idols and uncleanness have crept into our lives as clergy, religious and faithful in our diocese. Though the Holy Spirit dictated to Saint John much to commend about the Church of Ephesus, He had one complaint that must have seared their soul. *You do not love me as much as you used to when I was your first love!* Perhaps our love for Jesus and His commission to *proclaim the Good News* has grown cold in our daily lives and we have been *stumbling because we have not been listening to His Word*. Perhaps we need Him, the Good Vinedresser, *to remove those branches that have borne no fruit, gather them up and throw them into the fire, and to prune those that have borne fruit to make them bear even more*. To the Church in Ephesus the Spirit said: *Repent and do the works you did at first*. Our Synod is surely an invitation from the Holy Spirit in our own time to *remove from our midst any hearts of stone and be cleansed by the word He has spoken*. Then, *hearts fresh and spirits new*, we will grow in learning, by a new formation and new catechesis, of *the marvels God has worked for us* and spread joyfully among the poor *His everlasting mercy and the holiness of His name*.

7. Through our Synod the Holy Spirit has called us to be a Church that looks, above all, like our Father's joyful family. We live full of joy that *He took us from the nations and gathered us to be His people with Him as our God. For once we were not a people at all but now we are the people of God; and once we had not received mercy but now we have received mercy*. Having been called together to be His new creation we are to become *living stones, letting ourselves be built into a spiritual house, rejoicing to be His chosen race, His royal priesthood and His holy nation*. But the Spirit has revealed that the first sign He wants our parishes and diocese to show in order to be truly His people is that we welcome everyone with open arms, that we are a welcoming family of faith where all members feel they belong, especially the young and those families we find broken by our topsy-turvy world as they stumble into our midst. It is by being actively welcoming and open that we will receive the reward from our Father to be the vibrant, growing Church *that He bequeathed to our forefathers*.

8. Finally, the Spirit has called us to be a missionary diocese of evangelisation. Our missionary effort, of course, must be centred on our personal relationship of holiness with Jesus Christ for He calls us to be a *holy nation, a consecrated people set apart to worship Him with the fragrant sacrifice of our good lives; to remain in Him in order to bear much fruit, because apart from Him we can do nothing*. But He commissions us to reach out to all of society, in particular to that ever-growing number of those who feel excluded and on the margins, because they have been made to feel poor or unworthy, both inside and outside of our Church, and for us to proclaim to all, without distinction, *the mighty deeds of God who calls the whole world out of darkness into His marvellous light*. In the modern world of today the Holy Spirit has told us that proclamation means communication in all its media, from bulletins to social media, from every day contacts with family and friends, to street apostolate among the citizens of the world.

9. In the end, we do not forget that the Lord Jesus is our *cornerstone. To us who believe, He is the most precious thing. We want to abide in Him and for Him to abide in us for He is the Vine and we are the branches. Abiding in Him with His words abiding in us, we go forward full of trust and confidence that we may ask whatever we wish, and it will be done for us, for the Father of Jesus is glorified by this, that we bear much fruit and become, again, His fruitful disciples*.

Catholic Population and Number of Parishes

Deanery	Catholic Population	Parishes	Average Parishioners/Parish
East Renfrewshire	20,135	5	4,027
Inverclyde	30,156	11	2,741
Renfrewshire	39,769	17	2,339
Diocese of Paisley	90,060	33	2,729

Scotland's Census 2012

Scotland's Census 2011 - National Records of Scotland Diocese of Paisley

	All people	Ch of Scotland	Catholic	Other Xtian	Buddhist	Hindu	Jewish	Muslim	Sikh	Other Ref	No Ref	Ref not stated
Scotland	5,295, 403	1,717,871	841,053	291,275	12,795	16,379	5,887	76,737	9,055	15,196	1,941,116	368,039
East Renfrewshire	90,574	30,279	20,135	3,724	172	366	2,399	3,002	548	171	24,041	5,737
Inverclyde	81,485	26,852	30,156	3,340	71	101	8	197	98	142	15,674	4,846
Renfrewshire	174,908	56,366	39,769	6,816	257	273	63	1,313	573	360	57,132	11,986
Diocese of Paisley	346,967	113,497	90,060	13,880	500	740	2,470	4,512	1,219	673	96,847	22,569

References

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- ¹ Appendix **Catholic Population and Number of Parishes**
² Appendix **Scotland's Census 2011.**

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- ³ cc. 460-468

Page 18, 19, 20, 21

- ⁴ Paul VI.
⁵ Lumen Gentium, Chapter 1.
⁶ Ibid Chapter 2
⁷ Ibid Chapter 4, especially nos. 30 & 33; Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity
⁸ Gaudium et Spes passim; Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, the Decree on Ecumenism, the Decree on Bishops' Pastoral Office in the Church, the Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests, and the Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity
⁹ Lumen Gentium (n. 26), and in the Decree on the Bishops' Pastoral Office in the Church, the Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity, the Decree on Eastern Catholic Churches, and the Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests.
¹⁰ Decree on Eastern Catholic Churches
¹¹ Decree of Ecumenism and in the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (Lumen Gentium).

- ¹² Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation; Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity; Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy; Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church ("The Call of the Whole Church to Holiness"); Decree on the Bishops' Pastoral Office in the Church; Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests; Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity; Decree on the Appropriate Renewal of the Religious Life;
¹³ Lumen Gentium (chapter III) and reaffirmed in Decrees on Bishops, Priests, and Religious Life
¹⁴ Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions; Declaration on Religious Freedom.
¹⁵ Lumen Gentium 5; Gaudium et Spes 44.
¹⁶ Lumen Gentium 8.
¹⁷ Mark 1:14-15.
¹⁸ Ad Gentes .2
¹⁹ Evangelii Nuntiandi (1975),
²⁰ Ibid 14
²¹ no. 13
²² The key texts in which reference to New Evangelisation appears are: 1990 John Paul II's missionary encyclical, Redemptoris Missio 1997 The Vatican Congregation for the Clergy's, General Directory for Catechesis 2001 John Paul II's Apostolic Letter, Novo Millennio Ineunte
²³ General Directory on Catechesis no. 59
²⁴ Novo Millennio Ineunte. 29.

“We must pray
for the Spirit to come
to us. If the world
puts obstacles in our
way that the Spirit
removes them.”

- From Parish Consultation



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