Parish Listening Sessions Synod Summary Report



This form is to be completed by the Parish Delegates, drawing on all the group listening sessions and activities that have taken place in the parish. It can be emailed to Synod@cliftondiocese.com or completed on-line at www.cliftondiocese.com/synod.

Name of Parish and Deanery

St Patrick's Parish, East Bristol Deanery

Name of Parish Priest

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Please provide a brief summary of your parish's listening session for the Foundational Question:

A Synodal Church, in announcing the Gospel, "journeys together". How is this "journeying together" happening today in your parish? How is the Holy Spirit inviting your parish community to grow in "Journeying together"? Where in these experiences do you hear the voice of the Holy Spirit.

Introduction

In our parish eight parishioners volunteered to be parish delegates. We attended a mixture of online and face-to-face information sessions. When we met together to discuss plans for parish listening events, we came to the conclusion that we would be unlikely to cover all the questions suggested in the Diocesan resources in our listening sessions. We were concerned that some of the wording of the Diocesan questions may be difficult for some to understand or to know how to respond, so the delegates summarised the Diocesan questions in four simple questions:

- 1. What do you enjoy about St Patrick's Parish?
- 2. What hinders or stops you from taking part in parish activities?
- 3. Do you feel part of the Parish community? And how do you feel part of the Parish community?
- 4. What could be done to make people feel more involved or included in the Parish community?

For listening sessions, a fifth question was used when possible or appropriate:

5. Where do you see or hear the Holy Spirit in this Parish/in this meeting?

The questions were published in the Parish bulletin every week for 6 weeks from mid-January onwards, to give parishioners an idea of what the listening sessions would be about. The questions were written up on notice boards in the church Narthex, our 'listening boards', with post-it notes provided. At Sunday masses parishioners were invited to contribute their answers to the questions and engage with the delegates in the Narthex after mass.

Over four Sundays and eight masses, approximately 50 parishioners posted 72 post-it notes. Engagement was seen across the ages, including primary school children and some older parishioners. These short responses have been included in the report of themes generated at the listening sessions. Photographs of the boards are being sent as supplementary material along with our report.

Over a four-week period, 13 listening sessions with 48 parishioners have taken place. Some of these were one-to-one sessions with residents of Dillon Court (age 50+), where they did not want to join a group session, mostly due to COVID-19 concerns. Some listening sessions took place within meetings of different parish groups, such as the Married Couples Group, the Women's Group and the Come and See Group (a group for teenage boys who want to learn more about the vocation to the priesthood). The largest listening event had 14 participants who were divided into two breakout groups. The choir and music group members were invited to a session before a choir rehearsal. Parishioners were invited to attend one of four open sessions, run on two weekday evenings, a Saturday evening and after mass on a Sunday morning. Overall, the take up for these meetings was fairly low. Most of the group listening sessions began with a time for group prayer followed by silent reflection.

St Patrick's school were involved with the schools' programme for Synod listening. Their answers have been included in the schools' submissions, not as part of this Parish report.

Journeying Together

- 1. Many people mentioned the sense of community and the enduring friendships they had found in the parish. "You always see someone you know," or "It's like a family." Many commented that the parish community was the most valuable and enjoyable aspect of this parish. The welcome they had experienced in the parish was mentioned, especially in difficult personal circumstances such as illness and bereavement. Some said that welcome had been significant in "rebuilding" their lives after traumatic events in their personal lives (divorce). However, others talked about the "shame" of going through divorce. It should be noted that these people were married in the parish and lived there.
- 2. Some people had experienced a different "welcome" and described feeling excluded due to nobody approaching them after mass. All agreed that a personal "invitation" was needed to make people feel part of the parish.
- 3. Despite the positive comments about the welcoming nature of the parish, many participants recognised that this is not always the case. They further recognised a personal responsibility to approach unfamiliar faces and introduce oneself. One person set themselves a personal challenge of speaking to one unfamiliar person each week after mass.
- 4. A number of people described the parish as "relaxed", usually in comparison to other parishes to which they had belonged. Non-Catholic members of one of our Parish groups felt they had been "embraced" and were grateful for that welcome, but they had not felt it was appropriate to join in liturgy or maybe they hadn't been invited.
- 5. Those who were members of parish groups found them very positive and enjoyable (Women's group, Married Couples, Choir and music group, Altar Servers, Come and See group). People said that Parish groups bring parishioners together and involve them in the parish. It was noted that we have a large number of altar servers in our Parish and that this was a good way of getting the youth involved in parish life. However, a number of people expressed concerns about parish groups. These can be broadly summarised as follows:
- Are groups really inclusive if they are not open to all? Some groups are "by invitation." Is this inclusive?
- Some groups can appear to be 'cliques' as one person said "it seems like them and us".
- Age seems to be a limiting factor and most groups do not seem to reflect a broad range of ages.
- To some people the groups are simply titles, and they have no idea who is in them, what happens in them or how to join.
- The lack of a group aimed at youth was noted. Although there have been a number of invitation groups, there has not been a "youth group" for a while. Participants in the "Come and See group", aimed at young men (under 18) exploring a possible vocation to priesthood) could see no reason why it could not be "gender neutral" and thus include girls.
- Some young parishioners commented that it was hard for youth to be involved in groups that look like they are for older people.
- 6. Many people mentioned the ethnic diversity of the parish as a positive thing, bringing them into contact with people they might not otherwise encounter. Some felt that there had been greater integration between these groups over the past few years. It was also noted that this diversity was reflected in those performing ministries in the church; readers, Eucharistic ministers, Children's

Liturgy of the Word (CLOW), altar servers, music. However, some people felt that defining groups on ethnic grounds had its issues: while it is positive to have a rota for providing tea and coffee after Sunday masses which includes "the African community, the Polish community" etc, because it facilitates a wide range of parishioners being able to contribute, many questioned whether this fostered integration or separatism. As one young person said, "You should cherish your own culture but be part of one community."

- 7. Providing tea and coffee after mass was seen as a good opportunity for fellowship with and getting to know other parishioners.
- 8. It was noted that not all parishioners know each other, and this makes it harder for some people to join in parish activities. Being known or called by your name was very important to the sense of welcome and belonging.
- 9. The school is seen as a positive element in parish life. Mention was made of the friendships and education received being "life-changing". Pupils in the school have said they enjoy seeing their friends and some teachers at church. They enjoy CLOW and tea, coffee and biscuits after mass. They don't enjoy the length of mass or being expected to be quiet!
- 10. Many people referred to the parish being more active socially, in times past. This was not merely a reflection of Covid restrictions. There was clearly an appetite to get social activities "up and running" again. Some people commented that Parish events, often fund-raising activities, brought parishioners together and was also seen as a good opportunity for people from outside the parish to get involved. For example, the Christmas bazaar, summer fete, fireworks night, soup lunches. In addition, some felt that non-religious social events would help encourage those who are non-catholics to become involved in the church community. This can also be a way of showing others (with no faith) how we live our faith. There may be opportunities to show people around the church, explain the meanings of the religious works and this was a chance to evangelise.
- 11. Some people commented that being part of a faith community helped to support their own faith journey.
- 12. A number of participants felt that the presence of clergy following mass was a huge support to a feeling of inclusion. They noted with pleasure when visiting priests actively interacted with people in the narthex then continued to interact with the community by sharing tea and coffee. They felt it would be very good if the Parish Priest were able to do the same on a more regular basis, as the presence of the priest is key to an inclusive parish. Many people are not able to participate in wider parish activities and events for very genuine reasons, but they still want to feel they are "known" by their pastor.
- 13. Experiences in other Christian communities were used to illustrate how "Welcome" could be improved:
- In one Catholic church an announcement is made prior to mass (by a reader or welcomer) welcoming visitors, giving details of the mass such as cycle of readings, intentions, special groups present etc. The congregation is then invited to turn to the person next to them and, if they don't know them, to introduce themselves. After that, they are invited to join in 5 mins of silent prayer.
- In one Baptist church the role of welcome extends to offering to sit with a newcomer if they are unfamiliar with the service they are attending, and accompanying them to coffee after the service.

- In one Anglican church, the welcomer who first meets a newcomer will introduce them to other members of the community over the following weeks, should they continue to attend.
- 14. Many people know each other by sight, but perhaps don't know details such as full names. There was a suggestion that the newsletter could include birthdays, photos etc. It should be noted that this would require full GDPR and Safeguarding compliance and would, perhaps, be impossible under those conditions.
- 15. A few people commented that surrounding parishes and their parish life seem less satisfying so people migrate here. Some parishes seem less interested in additional activity and are just going through the motions in their worship.
- 16. Parish trips and holidays were reported to be important opportunities for parishioners to journey together, to deepen friendships and share experiences.

Core Question 1 – Listening

How is God speaking to us through the voices that are in our midst? How is God speaking to us through voices we sometimes ignore, including those on the peripheries? What space is there to listen to the voices on the peripheries, especially cultural groups, women, the disabled, those who experience poverty, marginalisation, or social exclusion?

Listening

- 1. Seeing the Holy Spirit in action in others can inspire other parishioners by a ripple effect. It was noted that sometimes the Holy Spirit may work through our doubting faith and our disagreements, urging us to communicate better and instigate change or improvements.
- 2. It was recognised that the Holy Spirit can speak to us through our priests and deacons, through the homily.
- 3. There was a concern that we don't always remember those who have been coming to the parish for years and are now unable to come to mass. Perhaps it is 'out of sight, out of mind'. There was a concern that these people have become invisible and it is easy for these parishioners to be forgotten about. They may be praying for others, and this role may be unseen but is extremely valuable.
- 4. There was a request for names of deceased parishioners in the Book of Remembrance to be mentioned in the weekly Parish bulletin and in the bidding prayers during mass, as relatives might be deceased so there would be no-one to pray for them at mass.
- 5. One parishioner commented that our faith should not be listening and prayer alone, and that we need to take action to make a difference. A church in action is needed to show people how the church can help and this can then be a model for others to follow.
- 6. One parishioner mentioned the need for a "Listening Ministry" for those facing emotional difficulties or even crises. What was suggested was a mixture of person centred listening and signposting to practical support. This was not necessarily seen as a role of the clergy but rather as a service that could be offered by suitably qualified laity. Another parishioner talked about the

need for 'befriending' those who are lonely, maybe with home visits or a regular phone call. And that this would benefit those providing the support as well as the recipients.

- 7. Some parishioners referred to "a voice" which brought them back to "a godly life" or prompts you to attend church, even when you feel unwilling. Some referred to the power of Confirmation remaining with you through life.
- 8. When some people were asked how God was speaking through them, they seemed to struggle to answer. Some felt this was quite a personal question while others felt that this question may be difficult to answer for those who struggle with their faith and those who are non-catholics. The same response was given when some were asked how the Holy Spirit was guiding them.
- 9. Some people talked about having too much focus on acting in a 'godly way', i.e. by attending church, but they recognised that you can be a good person and help others without attending church. They suggested greater emphasis should be placed on helping our neighbours, supporting and nurturing the people to do this more.

Core Question 2 – Speaking Out:

What enables or hinders you from speaking courageously, candidly, and responsibly in your parish and society. What space is there in your parish for the voice of people, including active and inactive members of our faith?

Speaking Out

- 1. The majority of contributors to the listening sessions were people from parish groups, so all had a sense of belonging through those groups. Most groups have resumed after Covid, but broader parish activities have not.
- 2. A general lack of transparency and information within the church was mentioned. Many people were unsure how to express their voice and some felt they didn't have a voice or opportunity to speak out. One person asked how decisions about the recipients of charitable donations are made and felt this should involve consultation with the parish.
- 3. As a parish with an ageing profile it was positive that physical access had been improved when the extension was built. It was recognised that some people might have problems with transport and could something be put in place to offer lifts to those who would like to attend mass but no longer feel fit enough to travel independently.
- 4. Despite the number of groups within the parish, it was noted that some segments of the parish were not specifically catered for by existing groups Men, families and youth. Generally, it was felt that the parish offered little appeal to many young people and that was a concern to many. Others mentioned that some young people might find the strong sense of community can make it feel rather like a goldfish bowl. Some people noted that men can struggle to open up about their emotions and vulnerabilities so faith discussions are more difficult for them. It was felt that more open communication groups could help this.

- 5. Some young people felt that other people would think their more liberal views would not be welcome. It was felt this resulted in people speaking in "an echo chamber", rather than having their views challenged and their beliefs therefore being able to mature. Others said that the church is "too traditional".
- 6. Some people felt that the Catholic church is slow in responding to the key issues of the day. Some participants said that the church is out of touch and at odds with modern life, for example: sexuality, sex before marriage, unmarried mums, contraception. They believed that the rigidity of the catechism of the Catholic Church may force some people to pick and choose which aspects they adhere to. One example was that we sometimes listen to what we want to hear and ignore what we don't. Some thought that the teachings of the Catholic Church make it difficult for them to make any connection between their faith and living in the world of today. Some people questioned the origins of these teachings and if they remain valid today. There is a doubt whether there is real space for these questions to be raised and discussion to occur within parish activities.
- 7. Some people said that modern life gives us so many choices and there are false Gods in our society, such as TV and the internet, so that people have less time to give to the church.
- 8. A number of people expressed concerns that divorced Catholics may feel stigmatised. There was an acknowledgement that this could be "self-imposed", but it remains a concern.
- 9. Some parishioners appreciated the live-streaming of masses during Covid lockdowns, but others said they did not find it helpful and it was not engaging or useful for them.
- 10. Some parishioners expressed concerns about the numbers of people who had stopped coming to our church, for many different reasons. But it was also noted that we often don't know the reasons why they stop coming and one parishioner said they found it too difficult or awkward to ask them. It was also felt that there were barriers for some to return to church after a break in attendance and that the Syunod process would be unlikely to capture the views or develop any understanding of their issues.
- 11. Some thought that the roles in the church should reflect the society that we live in and humanity, and therefore women should be able to fulfil the same roles as men within the hierarchy of the Catholic Church.
- 12. Some parishioners felt that their work in the parish was not appreciated and they did not receive any acknowledgement or thanks for their work and how much time they regularly committed to the parish.
- 13. Some don't agree/have a natural affinity to the priest, but all feel welcome

Core Question 3 – Sharing Responsibility for our Common Mission and Sharing Authority and participation

How are the baptised members of your parish able to participate in the mission of the Church to proclaim the Gospel? What hinders people from being active in your parish? How is authority or governance exercised in your local parish? How are teamwork and co-responsibility put into practice in your local parish?

Sharing Responsibility

- 1. There was a concern that outreach in and by the Parish is limited. While it was acknowledged that the parish often gave generously to many charities, there was concern that people were rarely personally involved, e.g. with the soup run, local community initiatives, and foodbanks. Instead we are encouraged to donate money. However, it was recognised that activities with personal involvement, such as social action, would be a way to foster links with local churches and attempt to address local community needs. People also expressed a desire to be involved in the choice of charities for the Parish to support.
- 2. It was suggested that the parish needs to start up some new groups and activities, especially for older parishioners, such as 'Knit and Natter' or coffee mornings. Some thought that making friends and joining groups was harder for older people.
- 3. Some expressed concerns that visits to the sick of the parish and taking Holy Communion had stopped due to Covid but not been restarted, and this left some feeling isolated and ignored.
- 4. It was noted that some thought the parish priest understands his role and knows how to delegate tasks and responsibilities.
- 5. Some people who have had a long and active membership of the parish felt they would like to be less involved at an organisational level due to age/health issues, but that a lack of new volunteers prevented this. Consequently, some activities might not take place. A fear of taking on too much responsibility deterred some people and others were worried they would be 'sucked in' and have no time left for anything else in their lives. Others noted that the fact that it was always "the same faces", might make newcomers feel they couldn't contribute. Some long-established groups might feel closed off. Some people felt that it is always the same core group of people who take on responsibility within the parish. Some thought that there was a culture of 'someone else will do it' and this meant some people did not get involved in supporting parish activities. It was suggested that a call for new helpers should be given during mass, not just in the parish bulletin, also that a personal invitation would help people to see that they have talents and abilities that they could share within the parish.
- 6. People have acknowledged that there is a shortage of priests however were unsure if this was a global problem. Some said that other churches were limited in their Parish activities due to the shortage of priests. Some people felt that women priests and married priests may help this problem, and some were unsure why this isn't already allowed.
- 7. Lack of gender equality within the church was identified as a big disappointment and frustration. This is reinforced through the prohibition of women priests and deacons. Some felt that these groups could offer valuable input into the church and our faith, providing a wider scope of voices.
- 8. Our church's decorative appearance was seen in both a positive and negative light. Some participants found the church to be far too ornate and felt that money was being wasted on artwork and a simple wooden cross would be sufficient. However, some parishioners commented on the beauty and tranquillity of the church and said that it felt inviting and helped them worship and pray.

- 9. Some people felt that the apparent focus on money in this Parish was at odds with the central message of Christianity. Globally the Church is seen as a rich institution and the constant request for donations, at times of economic hardship, seems an onerous requirement for some members of the parish and may be responsible for people leaving the parish.
- 10. Some people mentioned the positive contribution made by the significant numbers of "converts", who frequently demonstrate a great passion for their faith, which can have a positive effect on those around them.
- 11. Some people expressed an interest in forming closer links with neighbouring parishes and other Christian communities.

Core Question 4 – Discerning and Deciding

How does your parish use the methods of listening and speaking (consultation) to make decisions? How does your parish promote participation in decision making within the hierarchical Church? Does the decision making of your parish help you to listen to all members of the community, including those who are on the peripheries of parish life?

Discussion and Decisions

- 1. A general lack of transparency and information within the church was mentioned. For example, the lack of transparency about what happens on the Parish Council or about how decisions are made about which charities are supported. It was mentioned that people would like to influence the choice of charitable donations but didn't feel they had a voice or opportunity to do so.
- 2. Some people mentioned the lack of consultation with the parish when deciding mass times. For example, when the 6:30 Mass was suspended, many people depending on this Mass felt that they hadn't been considered. Some expressed a preference for a Sunday evening mass, even if it was not every week.
- 3. Some people wondered if having parishioners of all ages sitting on the Parish Council would be beneficial in the decision making process, to gather a wider range of views and opinions. Some expressed a desire to know who people are in the parish and what their roles and responsibilities are, who can help you, as they do not think this is clear enough.
- 4. Some people referred to the breakdown of trust following the various child abuse scandals the Church has faced in recent years. It was felt this had given people a reason not to get involved. Some inferred from this the possibility that what the laity had to say during this phase of the Synod process might not "make it to Rome".
- 5. Some said they felt the parish is more welcoming of action and difference. Even when you disagree with the priests you feel like you can share your voice and it is heard and that the priest is forward thinking and approachable. People feel they are able to discuss their opinions and express them without feeling judged. Others said they had not found this the case and had been dealt with rudely when expressing a contradictory view.
- 6. Though many of the respondents were excited by the prospect of being heard and seeing change in the Catholic Church, some wondered if the Synod was really asking the important questions for

this to occur or reaching the people who have left the church and may have insights into why numbers attending mass are dropping.

- 7. Some people felt that there was too much pressure to focus on Secular elements of the Catholic school curriculum and believed more time should be given to prayer and worship.
- 8. Some people, including those involved in parish groups, questioned whether defining groups by ethnicity fostered a sense of community across the whole parish, or if it removed an element of choice from group participation. As one younger person asked, "What if I wanted to help the African community do tea and coffee? I wouldn't be allowed to because I'm Indian."
- One parishioner said that the Catholic church needs to be more business minded to achieve longevity, for example by generating funds to enable action, perhaps starting up a Catholic bank. However, they acknowledged that some parishioners don't want action; they just enjoy prayer and mass.

Core Question 5 – Celebration

How do prayer and liturgical celebrations, especially Sunday Mass, inspire and guide your parish? How does your prayer life and celebration of the Mass inspire and inform your personal decisions and decisions in the parish community? How does the parish invite all baptised Catholics, including our ethnic communities, youth, families and persons with disabilities and their families, into the active life of the parish, especially Sunday Mass?

- 1. Many people spoke positively about celebration within the parish.
 - a. The enjoyment of mass: "I find it uplifting and I've been here for 25 years".
 - b. The special quality of liturgy at Easter and Christmas.
 - c. Daily mass or eucharistic service.
 - d. Children's Liturgy of the Word during term time. Children said they enjoy the activities provided.
 - e. Congregational involvement in liturgy.
 - f. The presence of visiting priests from Poland and elsewhere enriches the parish.
 - g. The church is open daily for prayer, lighting candles, etc.
 - h. "Canon Greg is a wonderful priest."
 - i. The positive impact of two parish deacons.
 - j. The role of the sisters at the convent in this and a neighbouring parish.
 - k. The close links between parish and school. This builds community, nurtures young people and is a "good grounding, even if they leave for a while".
 - I. The impact of parish prayer groups.
 - m. During Covid, mass has been live streamed the flexibility this gives was seen as positive.
 - n. The 'Church for all' services were informal, relaxed, prayerful, uplifting and joyous.
 - o. The church is a place to come for a sense of peace.
- 2. Some people said that young people are encouraged to be active and to bring young diverse experiences into the community, for example 'Church for all' services. These praise and worship services did not appeal to everyone. However, it was considered important to try new parish activities and encourage others to do the same. The role of younger people in 'Church for all' was seen as positive succession planning for the parish's longevity by older members of the community who saw this cross generational aspect as very positive.

- 3. The good quality and variety of liturgy was mentioned by many, including the music and readers. One person said they felt that people "strive for excellence." It was also noted that there were many opportunities for people to become involved in the liturgy.
- 4. Some parishioners said they were inspired by the homily during mass.
- 5. Some noted the introduction of the Pan-African choir and that our readers largely represent the ethnic diversity of the parish. Others suggested that there should be more mixing of cultures within the mass, for example readings, prayers and singing in different languages, rather than at separate masses.
- 6. The way the parish priest explains and guides people through the liturgy was appreciated, especially for special events when there would be people attending who might be less familiar with the mass, such as baptisms, funerals or First Holy Communion masses. This made the mass more inclusive and accessible for all.
- 7. Pupils in the school have said they enjoy seeing their friends and some teachers at church. They enjoy CLOW and tea, coffee and biscuits after mass. They don't enjoy the length of mass or being expected to be quiet!
- 8. There are many young families in the parish. It was felt by some, that they did not always receive a fulsome welcome and felt "judged" when their child was noisy. One person referred to "doing the walk of shame" if they are asked to move into the narthex because the children are making too much noise. This might make some parents, particularly lone parents, choose not to come. This is effectively barring them from attending mass, and preventing them from accessing a source of spiritual and social support. It may also have implications for youth involvement and formation: how can we expect young people to engage in later life, if they are not welcomed from day one?
- 9. There was a suggestion of "a version of CLOW" for teens a mixture of discussion and teaching, looking at links between faith, mental health, social life etc. This may reflect an experience of RE in Secondary school which is not stimulating. Another suggestion was that CLOW could extend beyond First Communion age, in a separate group, i.e. children in year 5 and 6.
- 10. The heavy work and family commitments of many were mentioned, including a number of requests that Saturday 6:30pm mass be reintroduced, as this was the only mass possible for some due to work commitments.
- 11. One parishioner said that the church focuses on everything being private so people do not think they should share or speak out, for example a private faith, private intentions, private prayer. However they also understood that some people prefer to remain private.
- 12. Post Covid it was felt by some that many had become "comfortable" with online liturgies and might have become "lazy". Re-establishing effective communication was seen as important to countering this.
- 13. Some people felt that there was ineffective formation for children and adults within schools, parishes and the diocese, and there was a lack of continuity. Some adults felt there was a need for greater spiritual nourishment beyond the sacraments.

- 14. Some people said that families, especially those with young children, were not made welcome at mass, particularly if children were noisy. Some felt that mass was too structured and rigid to cater for young children. Some lone parents commented that this rigidity excluded them from accessing the sacraments.
- 15. Some felt that young people would become more engaged in mass if there was more modern music.
- 16. For the sacrament of baptism, it was commented that the role of godparents has become outdated as godparents rarely have any influence or input in helping parents to bring up their children in faith.
- 17. Some expressed a desire for more opportunities for confession at set times and more noneucharistic celebration, such as Adoration and saying the Rosary. These have not yet restarted post-covid and were enjoyed by many previously.
- 18. Some parishioners said they deliberately chose to attend this church over other churches that were much closer to their homes, because they wanted to be involved in the community and parish activities. They also thought that the success of our parish is spread by word of mouth and parishioners inviting friends to come along, so our community continues to grow in numbers.
- 19. It was thought by some that the language of the mass can seem a bit archaic, and makes it hard for people not familiar with the mass to understand or enjoy it. Also that some parts of the mass may appear ritualistic. More modern or accessible language would be helpful.

Concluding comments from the delegates

Participants and delegates recognise that the Synod is a great opportunity to understand what the Catholic community wants and to look at the differences across the globe. There was a hope expressed by delegates and many parishioners that this would begin a process of dialogue within the parish and lead to positive change.