

Guidelines on 3 Tasks for Parish Synod Conversations

As part of the Synodality process begun by Pope Francis, Limerick Diocese is asking all of its parishes to complete three tasks in the coming months: one before Christmas 2021 and the other two afterwards in early 2022. The tasks are:

Task 1 – Covid experience

Invite members of Parish Leadership/Coordination Group to respond to three questions on their experience of Covid.

See Appendix 1 for guidelines for conducting the conversations.

Task 2 – Synodal pathway

Invite members of the Parish Leadership / Coordination Group to respond to three questions as part of the Synodal Pathway.

See Appendix 2 for guidelines for conducting this section.

Task 3 – Social group

Hold a conversation on similar questions with a small number of people from one social grouping of your choice. **Note** - we will need to get the views from as wide a range of social groupings as possible, so please begin this task by using the Form on **Page 4** for identifying the social groups you most wish to dialogue with, return to form to us in the Diocese (Michael.kelly@limerickdiocese.org) by **November 30th** (before you engage with them), and we will identify for you the group to prioritise.

- We include **guidelines on how to pick that grouping** so that we get a good spread across the Diocese. *(See Appendix 3)*
- We include an **explanatory leaflet** which you can give to the people you are inviting into the conversation. *(See Appendix 4)*
- We invite you to adjust the questions to suit the grouping you pick, without losing the focus of the questions. We offer an **example of the adjusted questions and the summary sheet for writing up your notes**. *(See Appendix 5)*

Each of these tasks could be in the form of an in-person meeting if it is safe to do so. Otherwise, they could be completed through a Zoom meeting, or telephone conversation with individuals.



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Finally, there are summary sheets for reporting back to the Diocese.
(See Appendix 5 and Appendix 6).

Please return the summary report by email to michael.kelly@limerickdiocese.org before February 18th 2022.

Appendix 1 - Guidelines for exploring questions for members of the Parish Leadership Group

Task 1: November/December 2021.
Invite members of Parish Leadership Group to respond to three questions on the experience of Covid.

1. How are you?
2. Overall, what has been the impact of Covid?
3. What wounds did it reveal?
4. What insights has it given?

Appendix 2 - Guidelines for exploring questions for members of the Parish Leadership Group

Task 2: January/February 2022.
Invite members of the Parish Leadership Group to respond to three questions as part of the Synodal Pathway.

1. How has faith helped you in your life?
2. How can we encourage and support more active participation?
3. What facilitates or inhibits our capacity to listen?

Working Guidelines for Task One and Two

If you are meeting as a group, the following guidelines may help to have a good meeting.

- 1. One person acts as facilitator and one person takes notes
- 2. Give everybody a copy of the questions in advance

3. Start with a prayer and a brief explanation along the following lines:

Task 1: *Since we held our own diocesan synod and undertook an extensive listening process, we have experienced a global pandemic – Covid 19. In many ways we are now in a new space, and we need to take account of the experience and its impact on our faith life and community.*

Task 2: *Pope Francis has asked for conversations to be held in every diocese across the world about the future of the church. He wants these to include people who are involved in church and people who are not. He wants to hear our views on questions about the role of the church and how people can be more involved with that role.*

4. For each task, taking the first question, followed by a moment of silence, invite each person in turn to offer their response making sure everybody gets a chance to speak
5. When each has shared, ask the group if they see a *strong majority point* emerging and also a minority point
6. Afterwards write up your notes in the summary sheet provided
7. If you are meeting people on a one-to-one basis, take notes and check back after each question - *these are the main points I heard you making...did I hear you right?*

Appendix 3 - Guidelines for exploring questions for choice of social grouping

Talk to four people from a social group of your choice. Use the same questions as above or adjust them to the group.

What kind of social groups? Here are some examples, this is a suggested list, there may be others you may think about, so feel free to include them here:

- *Community volunteers*
- *Farmers*
- *Healthcare workers*
- *Isolated rural men*
- *LBGT+*
- *Migrants*
- *Older people*
- *People with disabilities*
- *People in sports*
- *People in business*
- *People struggling with Mental Health*
- *Teachers*
- *Travellers*
- *Unemployed*
- *Women*
- *Young parents*
- *Young people*

Form for identifying social groupings

Parish

Contact person - name and email address of parish contact person for the synod conversation

Name

Email address

Social groupings we would like to listen to

We are looking to have conversations with a variety of social groupings across the diocese. To make sure we have a good 'spread' and that a good mix of marginal groupings are included, we are asking parishes to prioritise a number of groupings here that you would feel able to and happy to talk to. Please indicate four or more such groupings and we will get back to you quickly to confirm which **one** we ask you to go with.

1

2

3

4

Appendix 4 – Why are we asking these questions?

Why do we want to hear from you on these questions?

- Pope Francis has asked for conversations to be held in every diocese across the world about the future of the church.
- He wants these to include people who are involved in church and people who are not.
- He wants to hear our views on questions about the role of the church and how people can be more involved with that role.
- We are asking you to take part in this because we want to hear your views.
- What you say will be included in a summary report from this parish, and that in turn will be part of a summary report from this diocese.
- Anything you say will be treated confidentially and anonymously - we will note only your main points, not the person who made those points.
- If at the end of the conversation you are unhappy with any part of it, you can ask to be excluded from the report and the notes taken given back to you.

Appendix 5 - Summary sheet for writing up your notes on Task 1 & Task 2 Conversations

Task 1 – COVID Experience		
Question	Majority response	Minority response
1. Overall, what has been the impact of Covid?	<i>Insert feedback here...</i>	<i>Insert feedback here...</i>
2. What wounds did it reveal?	<i>Insert feedback here...</i>	<i>Insert feedback here...</i>
3. How would we describe the experience of this meeting?	<i>Insert feedback here...</i>	<i>Insert feedback here...</i>

Task 2 – Synodal Pathway		
Question	Majority response	Minority response
1. How has faith helped you in your life?	<i>Insert feedback here...</i>	<i>Insert feedback here...</i>
2. How can we encourage and support more active participation?	<i>Insert feedback here...</i>	<i>Insert feedback here...</i>
3. What facilitates or inhibits our capacity to listen?		
4. How would we describe the experience of this meeting?	<i>Insert feedback here...</i>	<i>Insert feedback here...</i>

Appendix 6 - Summary sheet for writing up your notes on Task 3 conversations with members of your chosen social grouping

Social group we listened to:	<i>Insert social group here...</i>	
Question	Majority response	Minority response
1. If there was no faith at all in our world, would it make any difference to you?	<i>Insert feedback here...</i>	<i>Insert feedback here...</i>
2. What would make it attractive for you to be more part of the church?	<i>Insert feedback here...</i>	<i>Insert feedback here...</i>
3. How can the church listen better to you and others (women, migrants, etc)?	<i>Insert feedback here...</i>	<i>Insert feedback here...</i>
4. If there was one good thing the church could do that would make the world a better place what would that be?	<i>Insert feedback here...</i>	<i>Insert feedback here...</i>
5. How would we describe the experience of meeting this group of people?	<i>Insert feedback here...</i>	<i>Insert feedback here...</i>