

SYNOD OF BISHOPS
XV ORDINARY GENERAL ASSEMBLY

«YOUNG PEOPLE, THE FAITH AND VOCATIONAL DISCERNMENT»

PRE-SYNODAL MEETING



*we talk
together*

SYNTHESIS OF THE 9 ENGLISH SPEAKING GROUPS

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ENGLISH 1

1. The formation of personality. In these times, what relationships, emotional experiences, specific events and places primarily determine the identity of younger generations?

The family is the first place where identity is formed, and the most important place for young people to find love and acceptance, which can in turn influence identity. Beyond the family, school, church and friendship groups are places where personality and opinion of the world they live in is developed. Identity is also formed by the world around us and situations which young people experience, for example trauma, natural disasters and the influence of media. This is contextualised with our different cultural environments.

2. Relationships with different people. What challenges and opportunities come to light in our increasingly interconnected, multicultural and interreligious world, where, unfortunately, differences and divisions are intensifying?

Globalisation presents both opportunities and challenges. Our interconnected, multicultural and interreligious world offers us opportunities to learn from each other, to gain vast amounts of knowledge and to accept each other's differences and value the richness in diversity.

Young people undertaking service, mission or voluntary work can give an experience of another culture, which broadens horizons and develops empathy. We need to be critical cosmopolitans. In some cases, this movement and experience of another culture is forced upon young people through migration, displacement and life as a refugee. However, a pluralistic society can often mean people living in their own very different silos, which can lead to a breakdown in social cohesion. People can pick and choose from different beliefs and values. We're united in one sense but divided in another. We need more opportunities for interreligious dialogue and integration but in a way that doesn't dilute or divide people's cultures. Within the Church itself, the challenge is the opportunity for unity without uniformity.

The role of media is hugely influential. Too often we're only exposed to sensationalised scandals and negative news, rather than the good news stories of humanity. The vast amount of information we take in from the media leads to a desensitisation of the important issues in our world today.

Young people are exposed to global politics which is largely devised and often takes away from the proclamation of the Gospel. Young people feel that the Church has a role to unite political division, especially within the ecclesial community.

3. Young People and the Future. What dreams do young people have for themselves and for the society in which they live? How are they striving to realize these aspirations?

Affluence does not equal happiness. Societies are conditioning young people to pursue material wealth. Yet young people ultimately want to have the power to help themselves and others, as true happiness is based on using one's resources to help others.

A lot of young people do volunteer work and want to make a difference in the world. Young people can show great determination in following their dreams, and joyfully living out their vocation, bringing a deeper richness to their life and that of society.

For a lot of young people, rights have become dreams. The right to talk, the right to be free, the right to work, the right to have their own home, to move for work, to marry and have a family. Young people dream of security, of realising the same achievements of their parents, but at the same time can find pressure trying to meet their family's expectations. Everyone is trying to fulfil what society deems to be successful, even to the point of living a life that's dictated by their resume, driven by a fear of not being able to get a job in the future.

Young people dream about peace and justice in our world. For some young people, they have never experienced living in a country free from conflict, they just hope that one day things will get better. In many places there is a need for reconciliation, for family reunification and for healing of historical wounds such as slavery and war, while many of the world's young refugees simply dream of one day being able to go back home.

4. *The relationship with technology. How does technology today, with its new opportunities and unprecedented dangers, contribute to determining young people's identity and way of life?*

Whilst there are many positive aspects of technology, including new inventions and the developments made in health and medicine leading to an improved quality of life for many, technology does not come without its dangers.

Technology can impact our ability to think critically and independently, and to be able to filter the truth from the fake news.

Social media, despite its many benefits, can have a destructive impact on our ability to form deep and meaningful relationships. It allows people to create an alternative identity, projecting the online image of themselves that they wish others to see. Comparison and loneliness are adverse effects of social media, as young people are presented with shiny, filtered, photoshopped versions of other people and their apparently care-free, perfect lives. Deeper emotions and anxieties often remain hidden offline, resulting in duplicity and at its most negative expression, suicide.

Another unparalleled issue is the danger and accessibility of pornography, and the negative impact it's having on young people's relationships, sexuality as well as physiological and psychological development. It reduces sex to a commodity and reduces people to objects, negatively affecting the way that men view women, and vice versa.

Technology is a good thing if used wisely and correctly, but we need to develop healthy habits and better formation and education of how we use it.

5. *The Search for meaning in life. What relation exists between the daily lives of young people and their experience of the sacred, spiritual realities and religion?*

Many young people, when asked the question "What is the meaning of your life?" do not know how to answer; they don't make the connection between life and transcendence.

Lots of young people, having lost trust in institutions, have become disaffiliated with organised religion, and would not see or label themselves as 'religious'. Despite this, young people are still open to the spiritual and a higher power, and several have had spiritual experiences which have strengthened their faith.

Rapid urban development has contributed to fast-paced lives and as a result people have turned to practises that enable them to perform at the level required. Mindfulness practises have taken off, sending one inwards rather than towards the transcendent.

Young people are conditioned to consume for the sake of it. We listen to respond rather than listen to understand, making it difficult to connect with a God that is experienced as invisible because there is no 'like' on the social media feed.

Young people recognise that there are many different ways to express one's spirituality, even within the Catholic faith.

6. *Young people and Jesus. How is the person of Jesus, as recounted in the Scriptures, perceived by the young people of the third millennium?*

For a lot of young people in our world today, Jesus is seen as key historical figure, an important spiritual teacher or prophet who lived out and encouraged a life of moral standards, but he is not seen as the Son of God or King of the world. These young people don't associate Jesus as a living being who they can connect with, and if they do, they don't see him as relevant to their own life.

For others, Jesus might be recognised as more than just a man who walked the earth, and might even be known to be God, but there are several barriers for these people getting to know Jesus on a personal level: the Church itself can be a barrier because of its perception by others; Jesus is seen as a mere commodity, someone who gives the gifts that you ask for, almost a Father Christmas figure; or there is a reluctance to surrender everything over to Jesus for fear of losing everything, life becoming dull and boring or being perceived by others as pious or judgemental.

There are young people who know Jesus to be true man and true God, the one who died for us and rose from the dead to save us. However, some experience closeness to God the Father or the Holy Spirit but have difficulty in relating to the person of Jesus as God.

7. *Faith and the Church. How do young people today live their personal faith with Jesus? What is their personal relationship with the ecclesial community?*

One key way that young people express their faith is through action: on issues of justice, peace, poverty and the environment. While this is a way for young people to live out their faith, it is also a way that some young people start their journey of faith and come to know the Church community, whose social mission is attractive.

Some young people walk away from the Church because they feel that the Church sets too high a moral standard which is impossible for them to reach. For others, it's the opposite: a lack of authentic witness found in the Church community.

A lot of young people feel alienated from the Church; they lack a sense of belonging and community; partly due to their transient stage of life, perhaps because often they are one of the few young people found in the congregation.

However, for those young people who do feel a sense of belonging to the church community, it is a strong one; for them, the Church is home, it is family. These young people are often engaged in the church community through youth masses, gatherings and events, while many find a sense of belonging and community in the new movements and organisations.

We need to work hard to change the perception of the Church family, which for too many people is perceived not as a hospital for the sick and broken but rather a house for the saints, which for many can feel unwelcoming and judgemental. However, the Church is seen a very positive light in the way it helps those in need, often reaching out to the poorest and marginalised in our society and in protecting our common home. In some areas of the world, such as the Middle East, young Christians face discrimination or even persecution for their faith, while some feel they are losing their Christian identity and heritage, so it is difficult for them to express their faith openly. Young people are looking to the Church to have their basic human rights to be met.

8. *The vocational sense of life. What tools can be useful and what moments are best suited to helping a young person make life's basic choices in the Church and the world?*

A lot of young people do not have a clear sense of having a personal calling and mission in the world. The notion of 'vocation' is often solely understood as the calling to priesthood or religious life, so many young people feel this doesn't relate to their own life. The call to marriage is often undermined, the call to single life is often misunderstood, and other life vocations such as the calling to teach, to care for the sick, to work for justice and peace, to work with young people or to serve the poor, are usually overlooked or even disregarded, and are therefore difficult for young people to discern.

In some countries, young people undertake 'vocational training', and so the idea of vocation is understood to mean a particular trade, skill or training course. Even those who have a better understanding of their personal calling and do not know how to discern this properly, and some see vocation as only one part of their life. In some parts of the world, there aren't the equal opportunities for discernment. Culture and tradition can be barriers to young people being able to live out their vocation, for example, children or young people forced into early marriage, or expected to join the military.

We can ask the question 'at what age does God call a person?'

Young people are moved by and attracted to real-life testimonies and personal stories, rather than being told, or even lectured, about vocations. This generation has more choice and freedom in discerning God's will for their life, where previously society or family might have pushed people in a particular direction.

9. *What tools can be useful and what moments*

- Youth trips, retreats and pilgrimages - where the focus is fun and community, but during the journey there's space to listen and reflect
- Assist young people to know how to listen to God. Activities that encourage moments of reflection on one's vocation e.g. climbing mountain with moments along the way.
- Top 10 relational needs identified for young people: Appreciation, affection, approval, acceptance, attention, comfort, encouragement, respect, support, security.
- Pilgrimage and immersion – some element of journey providing head space and prayer space for young people to hear God.
- Find new modes and language to understand vocation. The word vocation itself can be stumbling

block for many. E.g. Role v Assignment

- E.g. Assignment: Understand calling as from God with a mission that encompasses one's whole life e.g. I am called to help people by 1. Understanding faith, 2. Articulate faith in one's life and. 3. Live out faith in one's life.
- E.g. Role: 1. Daughter/Son of God, 2. Spouse (Husband/Wife) 3. Mother/Father.
- Assignment – the utilisation of unique gift and talent from God that one brings to their work
- Greece – 80+ priests... clergy from other countries as a result it is hard to find Young People that are interested in priesthood or religious life.
- Learning how to listen
- Youth trips and pilgrimages – focus is fun, but during the journey learning how to listen
- Finding out top relational needs of keeping Young People in the church e.g. approval and acceptance
- Trips, pilgrimages, journeys, retreats are often the start of discernment process, or moments of clarity and calling
- The language we use is a really important tool – the word 'vocation' can be a huge barrier and stumbling block to many. We need to rethink the language that we use which is more accessible to young people in today's world e.g. God's specific mission, calling, purpose etc.
- In the past, the Church has elevated the vocation of priesthood above other vocations – this can be difficult and even hurtful to Young People trying to discern their calling

10. Characteristics of a trust worthy person

Life experience that offers something that the young person is looking for with an ability to disagree but stay friends through affirmation of choices even if they differ from the mentors. Authenticity and integrity along with charitable challenge in a testimonial style, that shows that they are able to manage the complexity of life, especially that of adversity, always with God as a main reference point.

It is important that the person is patient and lacks a 'saviour' complex, trying not to give answers, yet allows a young person to discover for themselves and not give advice unless asked for. Aligned to this is persistence, the knowledge that young people have that their mentor will not to give up on them. Accompaniment or journeying with young people is what matters most.

- Encouraging
- Affirming
- Wise
- Live by example

The need for woman that are spiritual guides (directors), accompaniers and mentors is needed especially for young women in the Church.

Young people seek people with expertise and experience, with a recognition that the person doesn't know everything or have all the answers, displaying a good sense of humility. Acknowledging that Jesus is the ultimate trustworthy accompanier – friend, teacher, prayer, meeting people where they are.

Clear boundaries – where do people draw the line between mentor and friend?

11. The Church's manner of acting

The Church should ultimately be holy, in a concrete way: inviting, trustworthy, realistic, non-judgemental, prophetic, relevant, open-minded, understanding, practical, authentic, empathetic, supportive, understanding, accommodating, experiential, dynamic, persistent, honest and kingdom-building. The Church can be more credible by living out these values and by being a more outward-facing Church; one that 'smells of the sheep'. The Church can be more attractive to young people by offering opportunities for participation: youth councils, outreach programmes, creative liturgies, social mission work, theatre, spiritual programmes; ultimately, anything that allows room for young people's creativity, passions, hobbies and gifts, and which gives some level of ownership to young people's roles and ideas in the life of the Church.

It can also be more attractive in the language it uses, communicating in a way young people can understand and relate to, as well as encountering young people where they are.

An attractive Church is a relational Church: one where there is chance to get to know each other, build friendship, journey alongside each other at every level within the community. Parishes need to be missionary – realising it's there for the whole community not just for the Catholics.

12. Young leading figures - What are the preferred areas, in both society and the Church, where young people, with their talents and enthusiasm, can really be involved in the mission of the Church?

Young people have an incredible amount of energy and enthusiasm, as well as a very real desire to make a difference. Both the Church and society can provide the opportunities for young people to put this into action.

In the Church, young people can get involved in the liturgies and sacramental life of the Church, social media, and also beyond the church building itself, serving in their local community: helping the elderly, visiting the sick, looking out for the marginalised, the poorest in society, speaking out for issues of peace and justice, caring for our common home.

Peer leadership and peer ministry is popular, where young people lead events and gatherings for other young people.

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- Formation – workshops, programmes
- Choirs, music groups, altar serving, liturgies
- Social media
- Sports teams
- Youth Cafes
- Young People facilitating retreats

13. Preferred places – where do we encounter young people where they are?

Young people are everywhere! Cafes, sports clubs, pubs, concerts, festivals, the gym, political rallies, prisons and juvenile detentions, schools, universities; refugee camps, on the streets; ultimately any place where young people can interact with other young people. However, besides from these physical places, young people are hugely present online, in particular on social media, and the Church really needs to be more present here, as this is where young people are.

14. The initiatives to be reinforced – what specific initiatives appear to be more appropriate to attract the interest of young people, so that they can fully grow as person

- Big events which attract large numbers of young people, e.g. World Youth Day, Taize
- Young people sharing their own experiences, stories and testimonies
- Difficult to start new initiatives on your own
- Within the church - Leadership, volunteering or discipleship programmes
- Youth groups – that are really well-resourced
- Big events which attract large numbers e.g. Taize, WYD, Lourdes
- Concrete experiences of how to link faith with day to day life
- Music – resourcing Catholic artists to produce Catholic music – hymns that are liturgically correct don't appeal to YP
- Youth camps where there's space for group discussion
- Opportunities to experience other religions and people of other faiths and cultures
- shorter and relatable homilies with practical application to real life
- Lay people preaching homilies - with the right formation or qualification, or even without these things; sharing personal testimonies of God working in their life, which is often very powerful.

15. Instruments to be used – which approaches appear to be the most accessible and what are the most effective ways of generating among YP a sense of vocation, attentiveness to one's neighbour and a grace-filled life?

Music, empathy, lived experiences, video, film and documentary, the arts, silence, speakers from other countries, religions and spheres of life.

ENGLISH 2

Part 1: The Challenges and Opportunities of Young People in the World Today

Young people today are seeking to understand and be comfortable and confident in their identity, seeking a sense of self and attempting to express themselves in varied ways and outlets. Young people look for a sense of self by seeking communities that are supportive, uplifting, authentic, and accessible. They seek identity by remaining rooted within their family traditions and striving to stay true to the way they were raised. However, some youth do swear off their family's backgrounds, hoping to be more original than what they see as "stuck in the past" and "old fashioned." **Young people are looking for their "own path forward" as they question ideas and challenge and replace traditional norms established by authorities with social rules and conventions, in an attempt to authentically express themselves.**

In certain developing countries, young people are striving to be productive and successful, hoping for new economic opportunities that will help them find a better life. At times, this means that faith and seeking a spiritual life is not a priority, because they are distracted by these efforts. **Additionally, it is evident that young people around the world are becoming attached to and obsessively consume media in various outlets:** television, internet, social media platforms, etc., which is a context in which young people are formed. What is presented within media outlets which can become all consuming, begin to shape values that are not faith based, causing young people to lose an identity rooted in good morals and the Catholic faith.

Additionally, there is a tendency to become lost within these media experiences, especially social platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and Twitter, and young people are using these platforms to form their identity by what is specifically curated and shared about themselves. Young people create a false version of self, living in this virtual space rather than remaining connected to and interacting with people one on one, face to face. **This attachment to social media causes a loss of true identity, instead pushing people into virtual communities that ultimately isolate them from human interaction.** As a result, young people are thirsting for authentic community and real human connection, which results in a desire to meet people in smaller communities that are more intimate, personal, and tailored to helping them understand their heart and mind. Additionally, when young people become absorbed within social media and "see" everything others are doing, there is a tendency to compare oneself to what others have, thus leading to people defining themselves by what they own, what they do, and who they are seen with. **Thus, a sense of "dual self" is formed and authentic, true, single identity seems to disappear.** Young people are able to put on various masks and act certain ways with certain people: there is the "virtual self," who can be portraying a false picture of daily life and is sarcastic, snarky, and witty. There is the "professional self" who works, focuses on material success, and is productive and successful. There is the "social self" who seeks to connect with others, hoping to find friendship, companionship, and fun. And, when it is perhaps convenient or encouraged, there is the "spiritual self," that looks for a relationship with Jesus and strives to live the teachings of the Church.

Ultimately, it appears that young people today are scared to be vulnerable yet yearn for intimacy and personal connection. **Young people today are fearful of showing the one true self, who is a combination of many things, including daring dreams and passionate hopes for a greater future.** Young people today are desperate for community, which can help them discover their true self – talents, abilities, contributions. Young people today need holistic, integral, deep formation that is rooted in Catholic teaching, encourages vibrant expressions of faith, establishes good morals, encourages the desire to serve our brothers and sisters, and aids young people in identifying as passionately faithful and Catholic, which could come through organized programs within dioceses and parishes, within relationships with trusted, faithful, formed men and women, and through various media outlets that are readily accessible and available. Ultimately, young people today want to know Jesus, yet often struggle to realize that He alone is the source of true self-discovery, for it is in a relationship with Him that man ultimately comes to discover himself. Thus, **we have found that young people want authentic witnesses – men and women who give vibrant expression to their faith and relationship with Jesus and encourage others to approach, meet, and fall in love with Jesus themselves.**

Part 2: Faith & Vocation – Discernment & Accompaniment

Young people today have varied perceptions of Jesus. For some, Jesus is central to their lives, someone they know, love, serve, and are in relationship with and desire to know further. For some, Jesus is a reformer, who came to change society and the world. Some young people see Jesus as someone that is there “when needed,” but when feelings of faith and superficial intimacy fade away, he is no longer relevant or present. For others, Jesus is a historical figure who did specific things at a certain time. And still, for others, Jesus is insignificant, unimportant, and is not even considered “real.” These wide-ranging views on Jesus, a desire to be individualistic, and a fragmented identity have led to many young people to know the concept and idea of Jesus, but to not know him personally and encounter him in their lives. Additionally, the struggle to maintain an authentic identity often leads young people to shy away from being vulnerable in their life of faith, resulting in keeping Jesus “at a distance,” so as not to be honest or authentic with Him. To “live personal faith” is almost a foreign concept for some young people, because it appears that “Church” and “Faith” are very distant ideas out of touch with the reality of daily life, promulgated with demands placed upon life rather than a vibrant, life-giving relationship with Jesus Christ. There are also young people who desperately desire to go deeper, want to know Jesus more, and who want to be formed to live their faith more actively.

Thus, when there are varied perspectives of Jesus, there are also wide-ranging ideas about vocation. Many young people hear the word “vocation” and assume “priesthood” or “religious life.” But, when young people are invited to understand and feel a personal call to holiness – which is living in relationship with Jesus and living according to the teachings of the Church – they are inspired to know, love, and serve Jesus in every aspect of their lives. Young people are inspired by vibrant expressions of faith, of people who are living their vocations, whether that be the priesthood, religious life, married life, or the single life. When young people see men and women living their vocations in authentic, vulnerable, joyful ways, they desire to seek their own particular vocation. **The concept of “vocation” needs to be properly taught and understood: that is first a call – to know the Lord, live the faith, and be holy.** This is lived out through the married life, which results in the family, which produces and forms other vocations. It is encouraged, taught, and advocated for by holy men and women: priests who are accessible, honest, authentic, and present with their flocks, religious brothers and sisters and faithful lay men and women who give witness to their desire to commit their lives to Jesus.

When young people are encouraged to seek their vocation and figure out how they can be holy themselves – which is ultimately striving to follow Jesus daily – they are inspired to share the faith, witness to Jesus, and be transformed by Christ. Young people need to be listened to, able to express the desires of their heart, their confusions and questions, their hopes for the future, and their longing for Jesus. In listening to young people, we must also be willing to share our own faith and give witness to our relationship with Christ. Young people are looking for companions on the journey, to be embraced by faithful men and women who express the Truth and allow young people the chance to articulate their understanding of Jesus and grow further. But, young people do not want to be harshly judged and made to feel small: they need to be accompanied, through various methods, programs, and communities within the Church, that help them feel valued, aid them in coming to know Jesus, and ultimately guide them to finding and fulfilling their specific vocation, which will lead them to a life of holiness.

Men and women who walk with young people must be authentic, unafraid to show what they believe and how they live it. Companions with young people should be joyful, witnessing to the delight of the relationship with Jesus Christ. Those who walk the journey with young people must be open minded, non-judgmental, and show genuine interest in the life of a young person, seeking not to push an agenda, but rather walk alongside and help them find and encounter Jesus. Young people, who want to know Jesus, are sometimes fearful to begin this journey, and so those who want to inspire and engender vocation and help young people seek holiness should be bold and daring in their sharing of the faith, able to reach out and invite with enthusiasm and joy.

Part 3: The Church’s Formative and Pastoral Activity

Young people desire a Church that is vibrant, uplifting, hopeful, and welcoming. With the noise of the culture, young people struggle to remain rooted in an authentic identity in Jesus, and so we long for a Church

that introduces us to Christ, walks with us along our journey of faith, and helps us to understand and know what we are ultimately meant to do: which is be holy, share our faith, and witness to our love of the Lord. It is a Church filled with authentic servants, who are consistent in their preaching and living of the faith, that is most inspiring. A Church with supportive, honest, and present priests is a Church that calls forth young people to want to share and testify to their faith. **A Church that allows space and room for people to take initiatives to lead others to Christ, in varied forms of accompaniment and witnessing, helping young people see the many ways of living the faith and helps them to recognize that the Church is far more than an “institution,” but is instead a place to grow, meet Jesus, be formed in faith, and live an abundant and happy life.** Ultimately, a Church that remains true to its teachings and articulates those teachings in an accessible, transparent, vibrant, honest, way is a Church that is inviting, life-giving, and satisfying, and helps young people see that the Church is not “out there,” but that, in the end, we are the Church.

Young people want to be invited into a space: a Church that is big, and within it, many areas and places we can work, act, be formed, share, be listened to, and live the faith. There are almost two spaces: the space and place of the parish, which is a gathering place for various charisms, experiences, and opportunities to live the faith. It is within this parish life that young people can meet authentic witnesses, be encouraged to learn and grow, and meet Jesus. These witnesses are holy people with varied experiences and backgrounds, who are able to participate in the work of walking with youth and serve the Church by witnessing to and accompanying others. The Church should encourage opportunities for young people to gather together to be formed, to engage with one another, grow in community, learn about Church teachings, and be inspired to stay connected to a life of faith. The Church should support these initiatives (such as retreats, conferences, movements, youth programs) that are not only liturgical experiences but are unique and creative ways of expressing faith, in both financial ways and by sending priests and religious men and women to give witness at them and be present, and empowering lay men and women to walk pastorally with young people and engage them in relatable and relevant ways. **The Church should be filled with lay men and women who are called forth and empowered to do the pastoral work of journeying with young people in their life of faith, and not merely be bystanders, but given the chance and opportunity to witness to their particular realities and help build the faith.** Additionally, there is the “virtual space,” which as digital natives, young people are very familiar with. The Church should become far more present on the Internet, utilizing modern methods to communicate, form, advocate for, and help young people grow in their understanding of Church.

Within these two spaces, **the Church, and specifically the hierarchy of the Church, should be transparent, communicative, accessible, and authentic.** It is not a matter of necessarily “fixing a problem,” but instead, inviting young people *into* these spaces and helping them feel welcomed and “part of” something bigger. It is within these spaces that authentic witnesses, holy men and women living in varied vocations, can accompany and journey with young people growing in their faith and speak truth into specific situations, helping young people discern, grow, learn, and be renewed in a relationship with Jesus.

This accessible, transparent, and communicative Church is one that offers much, but one that can also be given much by young people. We have much to give the Church. Young people are talented, creative, filled with ideas, and ready and willing to share. When young people are given the chance to offer their gifts to the Church they feel ownership, pride, and joy in being part of this Church. The Church should allow room for young people to use their varied gifts and talents to help build up the Faith, inviting others to see how life with Christ and identity in Him is the ultimate joy. **Young people should be engaged and welcomed in leadership roles within the Church – they should be brought to the table and given the chance to give testimony and witness to their desires, ideas, and become part of the solutions that will serve them.** Young people should come to know, and be given the chance, to *be the Church*, not seeing it as something “outside of themselves,” but that they are part of this body of Christ, and find fulfillment, joy, and a desire to live and grow within it.

ENGLISH 3

Part I: The Challenges and Opportunities of Young People in the World Today

Q1: The Formation of Personality

Personality is developed within a variety of contexts. The primary context is location: young people in developing countries or countries in conflict have a greater focus on survival, whereas the youth of the developed world have a fight for success starting at a young age and seek to escape their negative realities (such as fear of loneliness or failure). The family is, of course, the primary place of formation of the young person, and even the family will be informed by a global context. Issues of family vary in context as well, such as socioeconomic status or level of safety. Secondary contexts include educational experience, larger community, etc.

Q2: Relationships with Different People

How young people were taught to live by their elders informs their relationships with other people. Whether in conflict currently or years after, differences can incite fear, insecurity, and prejudice in people from around the world. There is a gap between the vision of the future for oneself and for one's society. The way to overcome that is through intentional situations of authentic dialogue, to which young people are inclined. The sharing of cultures in a globalized world brings opportunities for connectedness and building community.

Q3: Young People And the Future

Young people's dreams and goals for the future are informed by their societal contexts, such as expectations of career, autonomy, marriage and family, etc. This then lends itself to a natural focus on self, not society. After conflict or crisis, it is a challenge for young people to dare to dream again, as they are often focused on escaping difficult situations such as war, poverty, addiction, or a lack of autonomy. However, they are oriented toward seeking happiness, joy, and fulfillment in their futures.

Q4: The Relationship with Technology

As young people are digital natives, they can see the benefits of technology in communication, innovation, etc. but also the perils of disintegrated family time and physical presence. It can engender a style of social laziness and insensitivity, as well as using a carefully curated online presence to hide fear, insecurity, and pain. Technology is a tool which must be used oriented toward the good, with appropriate moderation. The Church has to utilize social media and digital tools for visibility, evangelization, and communications, especially toward fostering dialogue and global friendship.

Q5: The Search for Meaning in Life

Young people are seeking meaning and something more, but do not always associate that with organized religion ("spiritual but not religious"), or perhaps have a relationship with Jesus outside of the Church, depending on the Catholic culture and status of their country. In many contexts, the meaning of one's life is tied to personal success (such as career or expectations set by one's family), as well as fulfillment and unconditional love. Young people also associate autonomy and choice with meaning, but feel a sense of missing out after committing to a choice, or a lingering sense of unfulfillment. Finally, if young people are not taking their lives seriously, the truth of faith will not be appealing.

Part II: Faith and Vocation, Discernment, and Accompaniment

Q6: Young People and Jesus/Q7: Faith and the Church

Young people today have matured in a time where Jesus is known as a historical figure or moral leader, but not always in the intimate relationship which faith invites. For those who do have such a relationship with Jesus, it is disconnected from organized religion. Relationships with the Church are often in political or doctrinal contexts, or by the nature of inherited (family) faith. Many young people find themselves struggling with or disconnected from the institutional Church, due to challenges on issues such as: the role of women in

the Church; sexual issues like contraception, pre-marital sex, and homosexuality; atheism; etc.

Q8/Q9: The Vocational Sense of Life/Vocational Discernment

Young people do not have a sense of vocation, nor knowledge of avenues for fruitful vocational discernment. The term “vocation” is often associated nearly exclusively with the priesthood/religious life, leading to misconception; there is need for a simple, clear, and relatable understanding of vocation as it is relevant to young people, many of whom may be called to lay life. A broader understanding of each person’s vocation and adequate resources would better prepare young people to grow in faith.

Q10: Young People and Accompaniment

Young people need mentors who have the ability to listen and walk with them, who believe that young people have valuable gifts to contribute, and who will make space for them to take on real leadership roles. These mentors must be living joyfully and faithfully as a Christian, but also be able to speak to the realities that young people face today without judgement. Mentors should be intentional about fostering all areas of personal growth and development in young people.

Part III: The Church’s Formative and Pastoral Activity

Q11: The Church’s Manner of Acting

Young people desire first and foremost a Church that is close to the people, loving and compassionate without judgement, and present in their lives. Young people value authenticity, vulnerability, transparency, and joy - and expect those from the Church. Their passion for justice would need to be mirrored in the Church, especially regarding groups on the margins, as well as laity and women, and their roles in the life of the Church. This Church would require a shift in culture from obligation to engagement, with a focus on community.

Q12: Young Leading Figures

First, the Church must engage directly with young people and hear their needs and ideas. Then, young people must be given actual roles of real leadership, not “token” moments, allowing young people to share their gifts, both spiritual and secular, in service to the Church. Let them be hands-on in building programs and initiatives, active participants in liturgical experiences, nurturing and harvesting ideas, and bring their voices to the table of decision-making.

Q13: Preferred Places

Young people must be met where they are - mentally, spiritually, socially, and physically. From schools to places of work and social settings, the Church must be present to where young people are, but also move beyond the boundaries of those expected places to reach further. Unusual and interesting locations or moments in the life of young people should not be overlooked, in a spirit of creativity and eagerness. It is especially important for the Church to have a digital presence and reach young people at their fingertips in a relatable way. While programs and initiatives are very useful, they cannot be solo occasions; it is of paramount importance for a culture of young adult-friendly communities to be developed.

Q14: The Initiatives to Be Reinforced

One of the most profound experiences for engaging young people with the Church can be an experience of serving those in need (volunteering), which is a mandate of the Gospel in addition to aiding the common good. Other opportunities, such as empowering young people to participate in planning liturgical experiences, connects them to the beauty of our faith tradition. Celebrations of holidays and festive occasions should involve intentional invitation and engagement of young people, to share our joy and hope. Participation in youth movements has also had a positive impact and should be encouraged, especially the leadership of young people in those contexts.

Q15: Instruments to Be Used

As mentioned above, opportunities such as experiences of service and justice can aid young people in being attuned to their faith and vocation. Creating space for faith sharing and intentional intimacy in faith

communities can also nurture this. Young people should not be alone in walking this path; intergenerational initiatives that engage young people in mentorship and collaboration with older members of the Body of Christ is mutually beneficial. Long-term planning and ongoing formation in faith is crucial for encouraging the engagement of young people for the rest of their lives, as is the commitment of roles of leadership for young people. Finally, this requires creativity and originality on the part of the Church. The Church must be open to the Holy Spirit's urging, in order to be willing to do things as they have never been done before: to dream and be willing to fall in pursuit of a Church which honours and welcomes its future as part of the present.

ENGLISH 4

The Challenges and Opportunities of Young People in the World today

Question 1

- There are factors that determine the identity of a young person which are family upbringing and Church formation, media, societal environmental and the inner self.
- For many young people the first place of formation of one's identity is the family. The family does not only form us by imparting values but also through what our parents give us through birth. They impart to us ways of being such that of being timid or more courageous but all these require a stable environment to develop. Unfortunately the lack of stability in the family impacts negatively these important formative years. The family is not simply the immediate relationships but it extends to the community one is brought up in. The Church community also plays a great role in forming the identity of the young people.
- The society we are exposed to also plays an important role. We are impacted with what the media portrays, the games we play, the education we receive and the way society values certain standards over others thus impacting how we perceive these values and we live by them.
- Living in a more globalised and connected era makes us more accepting of those who are different to us. We do not like being labeled, we want to be seen for who we are, and we want to take the first step in reaching out to others. We do not want to look at the religion, or ethnicity first but we want to encounter each other, to listen attentively to each others story and accept one another as we are. **The differences between us are not negative points but places of encounter.**

Question 2

- For many young people today it is important to share common values and not focus on the religious or spiritual aspects, however, focusing simply on values may lead us to an extremist view of society. We can already see many struggling and having identity crisis due to the fact that many do not know who the human person is, especially when it comes to gender ideologies. We young Catholics find it hard to speak about the human person being made in the image and likeness of God whilst still being sensitive in delivering the heart changing message. We no longer live in a time where it is easy to be Catholics, we must rethink the way we are bringing the message of the Gospel to people by going out and meeting people where they are at. Today being faithful Catholics costs us, we must be willing to be formed and no longer live to the fullest when its easy and fun only but we must hold on to the faith when things get difficult too.
- When we see each other we go beyond the stereotype and labels and we are able to see each other for who we are. It's a social maturity which we must all grow in order to really meet people where they are at. This encounter can help us understand who we really are.
- We the Church must continue to improve ecumenical and interreligious dialogue which isnt just dialogue but will translate into concrete action.
- People generalize about us Catholic too. If there have been abuses by someone in the Church, or the Church has been seen as hostile toward a specific group, people seems to just dismiss us entirely. We need to be with people and share with them what we truly believe in.

Question 3

- Young people want primarily one thing, and that is to be happy. The goal remains the same but society twists the means by which we might attain it. Many people today are lured by extreme wealth and the glamorous lifestyle, that media has been projecting onto us. Unfortunately many are willing to

compromise their values and belief systems in order to be affirmed and attain this perceived happiness.

- Young people want to live in an idealistic and peaceful society and developing their personality.

Question 4

- Technology for us is a great tool. It allows us to connect with one another but we must learn how to use it well. Technology today gives us the opportunity to keep options open and allows us to easily change our life plans. We must use technology to our advantage, to answer the questions of people that are searching for answers; to be a Church which is more present online and within the digital world. Let us be a people that make the media 'a better place' but promoting messages of solidarity and defense of human unity.
- Social media is now a large part of our lives, however we should not allow it to replace real life interactions. Social media allows us to filter our lives, and we must not allow technology to make communication a "faceless" experience, where we might be scared to take more serious action in life for fear of making the wrong decision.
- Because of the accessibility of technology we should create awareness of the possible negative impacts of pornography, manipulation, harassment, scams, fake news, and propaganda.

Question 5

- As young people on a journey searching for the meaning of life we should be encouraged by our differences and not divided by them.
- We want to be a generation that brings the fullness of the Gospel to all people, not a gospel of prosperity but a Gospel of truth.
- We young catholics want to return to a genuine catholic spirituality with the truth and Joy of the gospel, a real experience of Jesus. We don't want to be part of a Church which is not superficial.
- The challenge for the Church today is to help us young people take risk in life and not to be afraid to take initiative and to be assertive with going on on this journey for meaning in our lives.

Faith and vocation, discernment and accompaniment

Question 6

- Many young people have this idea that Jesus is their friend, God who is there for everybody, not only for Christians but for everyone in the world. Why? Jesus reveals himself to us through sacred scripture. We do not need to be theologians to know his word although we do need the Church to direct us and instruct us. But God can use our reading of his Word to transform us. We need the wise interpretation of the Church that we will not be lead into error. We Catholics must reconcile this great idea of friend and saviour which makes Jesus relatable.
- We are on a journey and we cannot expect to ever understand everything immediately, we must persevere on this journey, taking time to fully be transformed by God as he creates in us a new being.
- But many outside the Church do not always have the full picture of Jesus, many do not like that we water down the message of Jesus and the Catholic faith and put it out of context. People have seen Jesus as this brave person but when we hide ourselves or his message we fail to really show in a concrete way his love as he did.

Question 7

- Many young Christians dissociate their personal faith from the Church, and the Church must continue to guide these people in their faith. Many are content to practice only human virtues and not developing their spirituality and creating a relationship with God and his Church. We realised that the

interpretation of the word “religion” can affect the way we view religious experiences and expression both negatively and positively.

- People’s expectation of the Church is a place of goodness and a resting place of love and acceptance. Unfortunately, reality can be different, which lead to disappointment. Priests are called to higher standards, but we must remember their human nature and we shouldn't base our belief on priest’s personality, but on our belief in God.
- The Church hierarchy can sometimes be hostile towards young people, and are not always ready to accommodate and provide spiritual resources for spiritual resources to suit our needs such as the time of Holy Mass. Some people also see how some priests are being served by the faithful rather than they themselves are serving the faithful. However we must always remember that the head of the Church is Christ, who willingly gives his life for his bride.

Question 8

- Many youths do not stay thinking about their origins and what makes them who they are but what they deem as important is their future path. Young people are looking for a sense of purpose.
- God has placed a desire in our heart to do something. Many young people are not following their dreams and aspirations because of family and social pressures, they are afraid to risk and always keep their options open without taking any decision as they are afraid they will end up miserable with their choice. This can be very paralysing for young people. The idea of permanence is very off putting and creates anxiety which is why we became a generation of temporary users. On the other hand other young people are risking and trying new things. Some young people are discerning regularly what God is asking of them and are not afraid to move on to new things when the time comes.
- Our dynamic world does not give us the opportunity to make personal reflection, to stop in silence and discover who we really are. The more we discover who we are the more we are able to give ourselves at the service of others, and fulfillment.
- The world tells us that we can do what we want, and we can but what more important for us is for us to use this freedom wisely and do what is right.

Question 9

- Having Spiritual Mentors/directors is a privilege. In some countries, it is difficult to mention one is a religious person at school. This is considered taboo and many end up turning to teachers to start discerning their life's journey and be provided with time. Others turn to the helping profession such as psychologist and counselors to take on this role of accompanying people to discover their path.
- We must discover our freedom, a freedom to make mistakes and try again. A freedom that enables us to reach our capabilities and potential and not allowing fear to chain us down.
- There are many services open for young people, there are vocational centres, youth days, there are spiritual exercises available and the sacraments and scripture always provide invaluable sustenance on this great journey. But in countries where these aren't present these pastoral activities need to be developed.

Question 10

- Characteristics: tolerant, sensitive, attentive listener, persistent guide, consistent, and objective, respectful of our freedom, integrity and uniqueness, provide encouragement and give critical evaluation, critical thinking, has values and knows his/her limits, authentic, simplicity and humility
- We young people are looking for people who are not afraid, they are not afraid to speak the truth and not water down the message that we need to hear.

The Church's Formative and pastoral activity

Question 11

- Young people who are looking at the Church seek one is sensitive to their needs. They look for a Church which speaks about the beauty of the faith, the things that bring joy rather than focus on the 'don'ts' of the faith. We want to be able to speak with joy about the what makes us love God, Scripture, Liturgy, and teaching of the Church. We wish to speak of the Hope that the Church has to offer and to inspire young people to seek to this Hope.
- We want space in the Church where we can speak with other young people from other different religious backgrounds and beliefs to communicate together that we may be enriched and learn to live together in unity.
- The challenge for us Catholics today is to make this Joy and Hope which we find in our faith available also to those who are already happy and living a good life.
- We wish to share with other young people that the Church is much more than the few who have caused scandal in the Church. We want to see a Church which has a zero tolerance policy towards those abuses and scandals, but we acknowledge that these people are human too and we wish to extend a hand of mercy. We wish to see a Church which acknowledges its mistakes (past and present), rectify them but goes forward courageously with full transparency.
- We desire to see a Church which is attractive and which is not afraid to work in charitable ways such as with the poor and the migrants, to continue its great work and attract many to see her as she loves those struggling the most.
- We also want to see a Church who is not afraid to give us answers about difficult questions like the topic of homosexuality, euthanasia, gender issues, a Church which is not afraid to dialogue and journey with us.

Question 12

- We don't simply want to serve in the Church in the places where we are given space in but we want to serve in the whole life of the Church. We want to dream big, we want to do great things in the life of the Church we simply need the space to do it.
- Liturgy is a great starting place when we are active participants in organising prayers and music for the liturgy we become immersed and we make it come alive and not be mediocre participants.
- Youth events are also great places where we can be involved in but not only, we want to have religious social responsibility, we want to work for the good of society, to serve the community and this is very attractive for the youth.
- We want to see more young people involved in charitable work, but we don't only want it to be social work we want it to be faith filled work.
- Unfortunately, we face that we meet many young people who are apathetic and we find it difficult to encourage them and get them involved in work with us.
- We don't want to remain simple spectators but we want to active participants and we look to the hierarchy of the Church to give us the space to work such as these moments in the pre synod.
- The Church should ensure that it educates the young generation abouts its Tradition. The Tradition as lived by the saints can be an example of a lifestyle relevant for today for young Catholics.

Question 13

- Young people can be found everywhere but the greatest place to find us is at the schools, colleges and at universities. Young people are more easily reached at social events rather than at Church venues when it becomes more difficult to invite the youth to come.

- In great Church events we build a lot of energy and we need to keep this energy and not let it fade away so that we will be able to continue speaking this hope to our peers in our daily lives. We must be strategic in our communication with the youth and we must not be afraid to share our faith but proud to share such a message. We need not only to preach to people, but request actions of faith in order to create experiences.

Question 14

- We should be really respectful of people outside Church and acknowledge that they are already living life in a good way and are not waiting for us to form their identity.
- We should create Church surveys to see what the young people want to do rather than repeat events that have always been done. We don't always have to create big events, but simple intimate events can really work.
- However sometimes funding is an issue, and we wish that the Church invests more resources, both financial and otherwise to assist us in youth related projects.
- The Catholic values should help us be better citizens and we need help to practice to live as Catholics in society.
- Young people need to see great leaders who are willing to form future generations, leaders who are given the space to work and inspire others to be the next leaders.
- We see the importance of see Bishops Conferences, ecclesial groups and movements working together and with us the laity together going in the world. This pre synod is already a great space for us to work together and we wish to thank the Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops for giving us this space to be active participants in such a time as this.

Question 15

- We need to use the mediums which young people are using. Short video blogs are an effective method reach young people in today's world. We want to be able to communicate together and we want to be able to collaborate on projects.
- We wish to see the Church be able to translate the words she uses in a way that all young people can understand it.
- We want to see and hear more witnesses who are living the Catholic faith that they may inspire us to create more good Catholic families that we may be the future of the Church amidst so many families in crisis. We wish to see our children be the future men and women who will choose God's will in their life.

Questions to Pope

1. We don't find much support from Bishops conferences, financially and administrative - how can we move forward? We need to look for other places for money?
2. There is tension and division between different Catholic groups, movements and 'factions'. How do we promote unity and equality?
3. Can the Church be clear in specific moral teachings such as homosexuality, marriage, euthanasia etc?
4. What clear role do you see for the youth in the Church after this Synod 2018?
5. We hope that youths are physically and proportionally represented at the Synod 2018.

ENGLISH 5

PART 1

Question 1: Many members pointed to the primary importance of family in identity formation, with some variation from country to country. Some pointed to a progression as family became less important over time. Others noted concern at the breakdown of family life. Multiple members noted that if love and care are lacking in family life, then young people will begin to turn to other groups for help in forming identity. This can be destructive as in the case of drug users. Furthermore, adolescence and receiving the sacrament of confirmation can be the occasion for beginning to shed a religious identity. In other cases, members pointed to the importance of Church groups, music, and educational and career choices as influential in formation of identity. For some, the Church has played a crucial role in finding meaning in life. Many members noted the lack of adequate time for self-reflection as an aid in the formation of personal identity.

Question 2: Different challenges were presented based on different contexts. Some members spoke of the difficulties that come from living in countries in which Christianity is a minority faith, especially in cases of mixed marriages. Others pointed to the introduction of values contradictory to Catholicism into cultures from outside. In some cases, the tendency of some young people to forms of extremism can be a hindrance to the formation of genuine relationships. In some cases, there were noted divisions among Christians as well as within the Catholic Church in their countries, which can present challenges to young people seeking faith. In multicultural, primarily western countries there was significant discussion about the negative perception of the Church by other voices in society. In particular, the Church can be seen as intolerant in regards to issues of homosexuality and transgender issues. Some expressed frustration at sensing that other young people were closed to entering into true and open dialogue with the Church. Disagreement can be perceived as hostility. Other modern challenges mentioned included conflicts due to environmental issues, HIV/AIDS, and a lack of willingness on the part of older church leaders to include youth in decision making. Young people see opportunities in various forms of involvement such as choirs, drama groups, language courses, social action, etc. where they can both share with others and develop their talents. These offer opportunities to both meet new people and grow closer to the Church.

Question 3: This question received considerable discussion from our group. Many dream of starting a family and enjoying economic stability, while finding meaning in family life and in their occupation. Many noted that young people can feel preoccupied or even consumed by questions about their economic futures, which will often be tied to their ability to provide for a family. Some risk despair at finishing education and finding a lack of good jobs in their countries. The question of whether one should move abroad to seek employment was raised by many. Several members pointed to the potential for these questions to overwhelm young people. The search for basic sustenance can easily devolve into greed or an idolatry of money. On the other hand, desperation to meet basic needs or to “make it” can lead some to make poor life decisions, or even to prostitution, crime, and violence which can lead to even worse living conditions later on.

Question 4: Many members were agreed that new technologies present the potential for both good and bad for young people. Positively, some pointed to economic and social opportunities that can come from the use of social media. It can allow young people to be exposed to a broader world, which can be an invitation to reflection. On the negative side, many pointed to the tendency of young people to create online identities which do not coincide with their identity in the rest of their life. This “split identity” can be confusing for many, and can be exploited by human traffickers or others. Online identities can often become artificial. Young people can also be tempted to form identity around imitation of their peers and celebrities as they are presented in their online personas. Others noted the pervasive presence and addictive nature of pornography. Many agreed that new technologies can present a distraction which makes it difficult to cultivate silence, prayer, and self-reflection. A call was made for the Church to offer guidance for people on how to use social media prudently.

Question 5: Many members agreed that young people do, at least at certain moments, search for meaning in life, however it was also noted that in many contexts young people have become indifferent. Many also lamented how infrequently young people seek the answers to life’s meaning in the context of faith and Church. Young people look for meaning in different places: in money, work, and family. Some noted how young people often find it difficult to find meaning in the Sacraments and in regular parish life, because they

often lack understanding of the liturgy. Many had spiritual experiences at emotional events exterior to the parish such as retreats or world youth days. It can then be difficult to form a bridge between these experiences and day to day life. Several members noted the tendency of some young people to move to Pentecostal or other Protestant churches for “fire”. They desire intense and deep spiritual and emotional experiences. Others noted the tendency of some young people to seek spiritual experiences in yoga, or in the beauty of nature or music. Some noted that silence may form part of the appeal of nature and yoga. Finally, others noted that while young people can ask questions about the meaning of life, this does not mean that they are ready to commit decisively to Jesus or the Church.

PART ONE / SUMMARY

The biggest challenges of the youth today are present in finding their identity among the problems of educational and economic obstacles, internal noise caused by social media, pressures of the peers and an overall sense of being lost and not finding a place among adults who are leading, but not willing to teach.

Young adults are hungry for knowledge, but also hungry for freedom: freedom to choose what they want to learn, what they want to do, where they want to work, as well as the freedom to make their own decisions. They are concerned about their future because the opportunities aren't many and obstacles can seem unsurmountable (eg. lack of jobs and economic instability)

For these reasons, young people are hungry for and in search of meaning in their lives. However, they are finding it difficult to find the meaning in the Church because they mistrust religious and other kinds of leaders and so they are trying to find their way through other spiritual means which do not require relationship with God and commitment. The bigger problem emerges when young people try to find meaning in money and excessive work. If they struggle too much with their situation and future, they might turn to substance abuse, pornography or take flight in the fake identity of their social media.

Young people need the opportunity to learn, to search, to discover, to lead, to make decisions, to risk, to make mistakes, to rise up again. Only then will they start searching for deeper meaning and discover that the deeper meaning and stability lies in giving themselves to others, taking responsibility, not running away from it, and making commitment and being faithful to the relationships they form whether with God or with other people.

PART 2

Question 6: Young people of the third millennium perceive Jesus as a hero performing miracles or a positive historical figure, but often don't see Him as a saviour who suffered and the person who is both God and man. They are happy to pray to Him as long as they don't commit themselves to Him or form a relationship with Him. This leads to them not experiencing God's personal love towards each person. That can also be seen in young people leaving their relationship with God in the Church and not taking it with them to the world and in their daily lives. Because they don't see Jesus as their friend, Saviour and Lord, they can't take Him to their schools, friendships, families, etc. Some young people have problems talking about their faith with other people because it can be seen as an attack, obtrusion or intolerance.

Question 7: Many young people turn to faith in difficult times. Faith and Church helps them in the times of crisis, but when that time is over, they leave. They think: *God will be here, I will return again when I need Him.* There is a lack of willingness among young people to commit, because they cannot find reasons to do so. Many are not offered a clear vision of what it really means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ, and they do not expect to find answers to their questions in the Church. Some have faith, but do not fully commit to the Church. They aren't willing to enter parishes and other ecclesial communities because it requires consistency, responsibility and sacrifice. There was much discussion of young people leaving the Church and faith after confirmation or, if they stay in the Church, it is a superficial and occasional attendance of mass because of cultural tradition.

Question 8: For young people, there are two problems: in some parts of the world there are too many choices to choose from, in other parts of the world there are almost none, so young people are lost in searching and finding their vocation. Also, young people are confused because they think they don't have a vocation if it isn't directly connected to the Church. Another example of not being able to find the path in life is for being too focused on worldly things and not having the time, space and silence to self-reflect, ask questions and search for answers. They are following the crowd and don't see the Church as the partner in

this search. Some young people think there are no answers to their questions so they give up the search and turn to *casual atheism or a casual agnosticism*, that is, an atheism based less on intellectual conviction than on resignation.

Question 9: Many members pointed to the reality that many young people perceive the word “vocation” to refer only to the vocation to particular states in life, to be a priest or religious. This was seen as a problem, in that it hinders many young people from seeking God’s will for their own life. In this sense, basic education about the universal call to holiness and the call to the various states in life including marriage may be helpful. Many members also pointed to the need for silence, the difficulty of finding silence in today’s world, and to the complexity involved in discerning God’s voice. Is an interior feeling from God or the enemy? An African proverb says that, “too many whistles can even confuse a dog.” Many desired greater availability of discernment retreats which truly seek to help young people and do not push them just to become priests or religious. Also, some members pointed to the difficulty of finding good role models showing how to seek sanctity in their particular situation or profession.

Question 10: Members all agreed on the importance of accompaniment. Several spoke of the experience of feeling disappointed by the first person they chose to share with. Many expressed a desire for guides who are “fully human”, people who do not hide their past mistakes, but who can show young people how to both avoid and recover from mistakes and failures. Such people must also be good listeners, truly listening to the young person, without judgment even to what inner movements may not yet be fully expressed. There should be a connection between what guides say and what they do. Guides should be willing to challenge young people when necessary, prompting them on in situations which require courage. At the same time, many members expressed that they did not want to feel led by the guide, but wanted the guide to be someone who walked with them to the destination which the young person chooses.

PART TWO / SUMMARY

Young people of the third millennium are overwhelmed and confused either by too big or too small a number of possibilities and choices they have available, depending on which part of the world they are coming from. What they all have in common is the fear of taking a step forward and making a decision and commitment. That’s why it’s easier for them to see Jesus as a positive historical figure than as a person they will dedicate their life to. They choose the Church in difficult times, but aren’t ready to stay permanently and they feel that the Church is not helping them to stay.

Young people are confused as to what vocation really means and whether their life even has a vocation or a certain path they should follow which is the reason some don’t even search or question their choices. The absence of silence in their lives is a problem because, when they do question themselves, they can’t recognize whether the call and voice they hear comes from God or not. Therefore, many young people desire greater availability of retreats which truly seek to help young people find their vocation, whether it be religious or not.

Today’s youth hungers for role models who will show them by example how to live a good life, but who will also show them that they are allowed to make mistakes, but who rise up every time and keep fighting. Those role models (guides) should encourage young people in their actions and initiatives, help them and allow them to lead and not only be led. Leaders of young people should be teachers and witnesses that share their knowledge of leadership and not “bosses” who have control over everything.

PART 3

Question 11: Many members spoke of the need for the Church to become a welcoming place. It should be a home, or even a mother which can welcome, strengthen, and console young people, especially to those who are victims of injustice and seek the meaning of life. Many desired that Church leaders be accessible to all people in the parish and not just to some. Church leaders should also be accessible and not involved in factions or gossip. The split between conservative and liberal stream needs to be reconciled and the unity of the Catholic Church must be a priority for all the faithful. Some also pointed out that in many cases, parishes are overly dependent on the quality of the priest. Many members would like to see greater lay involvement in parishes, particularly roles for young people and families. There was also a perceived need for a greater participation by women in intellectual and administrative leadership. The group also expressed considerable concern over the Church’s negative image in public perception. This was seen as a serious hindrance to

evangelization. Some expressed desire for the Church to go out to meet all sorts of people in the world rather than remaining in Church focusing on those who most often frequent the church.

Question 12: The important thing all of the young people emphasized is that they are ready to be leaders, they are ready and are happy to take action and change things. Young people already identify many young leaders who are already contributing to their local church communities. These young leaders recognize their need to continue learning and growing from the elders who are our “roots.” However, they also often feel constrained by those who are in the leading positions, whether in the Church, governments or small communities. Many think that the first step to taking actions is in their own small communities, mostly parishes. Young people feel that the Church is not engaging people enough and that it doesn’t encourage young people enough to take responsibility. Solution to this problem is not just having good pastors, but greater lay involvement. There should also be greater encouragement for participating more in the daily lives of people.

Question 13: Young people invite the Church to go out and meet them in everyday lives and not to wait for the people to come to Church. Any place, from parish, to school, to a café, is a place where the Church can reveal Herself to other people. Many young people feel that arts and music are the means with which anyone can come closer to God. Another important thing is that the youth need a place to ask questions. We recognize the great importance of friendship and personal relationships in faith formation. There should be more small, sharing groups organized within parishes where people can learn about doctrines, liturgy, etc. Activities on social media are very popular among young people, for instance, short YouTube videos that portray the life of the Church or the Scripture in a comprehensible way.

Question 14: There were many concrete ideas as to what initiatives and actions can be taken to help young people grow and look for questions and answers. Many of them emphasized the importance of being active in their own parishes. Many would like to see WYD activities carried out more consistently at the local level. There was a felt need for young people to experience communion with other young people outside of the boundaries of their parish. Also, many young people find that coming out of their parishes to the daily lives of people and inviting them over is important, showing them that the Church is open to all and is calling everyone to encounter God. In Africa specifically, young people are looking for a Church full of life and with lots of praise and worship. Some suggested that bishops and priests be consistently open and available to answering people’s questions, while also equipping lay people to answer the questions of their peers and allowing lay people to lead the groups which don’t require the presence of clergy. A number of members mentioned the success of initiatives which involved both Eucharistic Adoration and music. Another way of helping and guiding the youth is helping those who need economic, medical, psychological or other help.

Question 15: The teachings of the Church do not need to be changed, but need to be clearly and enthusiastically re-presented to young people. Several young people commented on the importance of clear and persuasive explanation of the liturgy and the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist as an essential element in helping young people to live a grace-filled life. Without this explanation and true understanding, participation in Mass can easily be perceived as a burden. This lack of explanation in many parishes can explain the appeal of the extraordinary form of the Mass to many young people. Others spoke of the need to more strongly affirm and support those in the married vocation, particularly young, working mothers. Members affirmed the importance of the witness of personal holiness as an essential element in evangelizing and developing a personal sense of vocation among other young people. At the same time there remained concern that the Church needs to do more to respond adequately to the questions of the many “lost sheep” who seek answers to questions but seem blocked from finding these answers in the Church.

SUMMARY / PART THREE

Young people desire a Church which nurtures, encourages, and guides lay initiatives to live out full Christian lives. Young people desire to play their full role as active agents in many different fields including music, education, evangelization, and social involvement. To do this, the Church must be willing to facilitate actual felt experiences of communion among young people who find strength and deepening of Catholic identity as they associate with other young Catholic people. Pastors need to be willing to invest time and resources in supporting and nurturing initiatives which come from young lay people.

We strongly desire that the Church focus on seeking out those who have become disaffected, afraid, or wounded from past encounters with the Church. For many young people, faith can become compartmentalized, not really influencing any aspects of day to day life. To combat this, the Church needs to go out to meet young people in any place that is not a Church: in their schools and places of recreation for

example. Persuasive catechesis and mystagogy should also be presented so that young people truly understand the power of the Sacraments, particularly the Sacraments of the Eucharist-~~initiation~~. Also, the universal and local churches should explore ways to improve the public perception of the Church, particularly in western countries. The Church's perceived opposition to the human rights of some individuals can be a barrier to evangelization in western countries.

ENGLISH 6

Part 1

The formation of personality

1. It involves the Peace & security of us young people to create a more stable world, which isn't there today with corruption, climatic changes, war, terrorism, dictatorship, diseases, unemployment.
2. Over time we learn to search & work within the world to discover the desire for acceptance by peers and family.
3. The reluctance of being judged and left out in our communities degrades our personality.
4. Childhood, schooling and family stability plays a pivotal role that brings upon a complete emotional baggage upon us, together with the people we're surrounded by who influence our personality & identity of "Me" i.e. the pressure to fit into our peer groups.
5. Self-control in young people is the need of the hour, which has been lost in the pursuit of establishment.
6. For young religious, identity is the quest of spirituality as the child of God and bride of Christ.
7. We young people also need a safe & guaranteed space for participation in all phases of church and society, to explore our potential.
8. **The crisis of adequate role models as a point of reference to look up to.**
9. The acceptance & rejection from society defines our expression of our faith and religious beliefs - fear of religion, religious disharmony & a sense of being judged for faith.
10. Fear of authority suppresses the free will of expression.

The relationship with different people

1. The social evil of "hate speech" rising in countries especially with Christian minorities, influences young minds about perception of other faiths.
2. There is thus the need for educating young people about prevalence of gender equality, to both men as well as women and also other such social evils.
3. The young people want to overcome minority discriminations in the church as well as beyond (jobs, school, relationships).
4. The young people today believe in inter-religious interactions, inter-cultural sharing, and reciprocal associations with others irrespective of socio-religious barriers.
5. The young people also believe in raising their voice against racism, cast based isolation, religious disharmony & other discriminations.
6. The young people are not comfortable with the fragmentation of new rites (in some countries) within the Catholic Church. "We want to be united in our diversity" is our voice.

Young people and their future

1. Our dreams are big but often we get distracted down the path.
2. We want to feel free to make our own decisions, choices & have a sense of fulfillment.
3. We want to be involved in planning for ourselves and need to be heard today, before its late.
4. The younger generations are expected to be more open minded about the global diversity (religions, culture, beliefs, practices & virtues).
5. Enculturation and migration impacts our lifestyle but young people need to be success driven & focused.
6. The young need self-realization to achieve not money but satisfaction.
7. Young people must realize the importance to stay in their own country to make it better, rather than migrating elsewhere.
8. Young people need to aspire for higher education and contribute to the society thus also creating eligible & bright Catholics.
9. Our dreams to serve the society are often crushed by pressure from family (for jobs, future, marriage etc).
10. Young people mostly end up living their parents failed dreams.

11. Young Catholics need to enter politics to make a difference in the socio-political scenarios of their country.
12. There is an alarming need for increase in faith formation of young people to prevent declining faith, with innovation in the approach.

Relationship with Technology

1. Technology is a blessing as a knowledge pool, which provides us an ocean of information, learning, networking, connectivity & spread the message of God.
2. Many also use technology responsibly, innovatively, creatively for mobilization, awareness, community building, fund raising & to reach out.
3. However, Technology can also make young people lazy as it makes one superficial & impatient.
4. Earlier people had to work significantly to establish themselves but now the need is gone.
5. Technology can risk making us the “Me” Generation, hard to express face to face, we find it easy to interact on social media but shy away in person. We face various threats of not connecting via social media, with the whatsapp blue ticks & the number of likes on Facebook.
6. We face tremendous distraction from the present moment and shut ourselves from the real world.
7. “If its not on social media, it never happened” is the trend of the era.
8. We may have 1500 friends on social media but not even 15 to wipe our tears.
9. “Technology discipline” is what young people need to learn (i.e. when and how to use technology), rather than a “Status Symbol” which will also open the door to deeper insight and prayer.
10. It’s sometimes necessary to put social media aside and learn to speak & dialog in person – that’s the key to leadership, public speaking & relationship building.
11. Advertisements impact perception and personality because we tend to follow the trend in order to create an appealing impression of us.
12. An epidemic of acceptance of violence and disharmonic approach towards dealing with an issue.
13. Media dictates the norm and manipulates one’s thought and perception.

The search for meaning in life

1. We have a deeper desire for faith and God and we are in search for a “true companion in life” – just like Jesus, who would accompany me despite my weaknesses.
2. The digital distractions & social pressures block our quest for search of divinity & the temple within. The young need inner silence and peace but there is no time for introspection in this rat race.
3. The distinction between social and spiritual obligations is declining, and we tend to live dual parallel lives; a spiritual one and a social one.
4. Young people need to apply their wisdom to what they hear and see in the society.
5. Life is to be more about what we “Need” than what we “want” but it’s jumbled in the commercial world today.
6. Searching the purpose of life and being content with what we are, to fulfill our passions.
7. The rise in “workaholism” and equating life to work affects our family lives and commitment to family vocation.
8. St Augustine said “My heart is restless until it rests in God!”, most of us young people fail to understand this.
9. It is “to be known and to know; To be loved and to love”.
10. Young people are questioning a lot about issues such as same sex marriages, contraception, abortions etc as they are not convinced with answers in traditional teachings of the church.
11. When young people experience suffering is when they are able to find more meaning to life and learning from sufferings of self and others.
12. Young people! keep seeking until you find it. Do not give up. Just believe and not be disc

Part 2

Young people and Jesus

1. Not just savior & redeemer – Also a friend and companion.
2. God’s love as a father, a doctor (healer) →a source of the grace of forgiveness.

3. Hesitation of challenges in life – Jesus the love of my life, motivator, always there for me, a guide.
4. A just person - against social evils, efficient administrator, stands up for what's right, courageous whose example we want to follow in action.
5. A normal man, who learnt by experience, prepared himself for life, did the will of god. Found the source of his hope & purpose in God the father. Made himself a role model
6. He is a person of reference → We need to question ourselves “Is it what he wants me to do?”
7. Jesus is when you wake up happy in spite of all hardships in life, pains & struggles – that unknown Joy is Jesus.
8. Jesus is my push button.
9. Though it is difficult to submit to him, he lays down the path for me.
10. Jesus loves us personally- talks to me – there is an individual relationship with him.
11. Jesus never rendered service for name, money - but service to mankind.
12. For people of other faiths, he is a savior in whom I believe, as one of 25 great men.
13. Jesus is a great man as also mentioned in Quran, Vedas & other religious books.
14. He loves me without limits → When I try to know him concretely, I mostly end up missing the point.
15. A "HERO" for me in whom I found love, honesty. Jesus is my valentine and one has to endure a lot to build the intimacy with him.
16. He is a source of power & strength.
17. A humble person who makes us realize who we are. One who puts us through trials & the hard way to make us have true learning in life.
18. A guide whom I could talk to freely.
19. Jesus is a person of authority and it takes a lot to know him truly. In some countries, especially in Asia, fear of authority is very high and this can make people afraid to call God a father. (i.e. to people's bad experiences with their own fathers.)

My realization with church community

1. Young people don't feel that they are a part of the church community, their main responsibility lying in practical tasks, not being involved in the decision-making and administration. Cultural limitations in working besides elders.
2. Young people hesitate relations with the church because of strict rules lining their opinions. Young people want to be free to experience the love of Christ but feel bound by order and rules. They want their own space to live faith and seek answers to the stipulated way of doing things.
3. There are too many filters to reach the church hierarchy and most youth are lost in the process.
4. Youth enjoy and feel a part when they are able to reach out to leaders in church and where lay movements are encouraged.
5. Church needs to understand the language of young people to be able to communicate with them – the radical structures, strict rules are difficult to penetrate.
6. Youth in the ministry have a way to reach out but the others are unheard, many don't get into jobs and education in church org.
7. Young people need the church to be a place of redemption where the young can seek answers to sensitive issues and social realities in the world.
8. There is a change of times and the context in which the Bible was written, someone needs to re-interpret it according to times (role of man, woman, abortion, family life, homosexuality, divorces, justice vs. peace etc).
9. In several countries the situation is better, the bishops and priests are young and approachable, and youth activities are organized by the youth itself.
10. The church should focus on the majority of young people who are not going to church.
11. This pre-synod is an excellent opportunity for young people to meet and develop a good relationship with the church. The church talks with young people and not only about them.

Vocational sense of life

1. Role of family support is essential for discernment
2. The Bible gives us hints and inspiration when we are searching for meaning in life. Sometimes we need to adapt the message to the context of our times. (male dominance, female empowerment)
3. Diverse cultural promotions to encourage skill based youth development.

4. Need to help younger generations review their needs towards society.
5. Need to find ways to merge the difference between different people and encourage them find their personal connection with their passion.
6. The role of sacraments in the discernment goes beyond our plans and helps us to find out path, our vocation.
7. Construct more value to life to help make the world a better place by being a good companion in helping young people discern their purpose of life.
8. Sometimes we are forced to live our parents' dreams. Our parents must let us be, let us live our own calling.
9. Live in the present and not be driven by fears & worries and listen to the inner voice and allow the spirit to work.
10. Fear of consequence against the bible teachings. The youth need to seek signs as the will of God, because God has the perfect timing.
11. Desperation for work, jobs & success drives young people away from the realization of vocation.
12. But when we do God's will, immense blessings pour in.
13. Young people have a strong sense of justice, they look for their vocation to see how they can build justice in this world. (Career choices: doctor, politician)

Young people and accompaniment

1. Continuous, patient accompaniment.
2. Active and tolerant listener, experienced with diversity
3. "Practice what you preach", be transparent.
4. Living examples, expert in their field.
5. The person should act with mercy and acceptance of the other.
6. Find connections and relate with other people about their skills and keep confidentiality.
7. A willingness to dig deeper, open and approachable.
8. Need to love and understand and means to be a person of God, help lead them to their journey.
9. Take them seriously, be a good friend and see them as a gift.
10. Guide and question them knowing their limitations to guide effectively.
11. Be able to relate gospel teachings to real life.
12. A god centered person who loves the other with his weaknesses.
13. They should not be judgmental about anyone's story, the use of "scriptural bombardment" should be avoided because young people might be scared away.
14. Young people should be given time priority.

Part 3

Action points

1. A centralized church action for refugees in Europe to make it clear that the church does not stand for hatred and intimidation. Each Bishops' Conference could write a letter to their community.
2. A defined faith formation resource material available globally (like YOUCAT but with more on faith formation), innovative and interactive.
3. Training young people to be spiritual directors. Providing spiritual direction with common program guidelines developed by young people together with the National Bishops' Conference. It would be best for youth leaders to take these sessions as young people are more inspired by their fellows.
4. Priests must make the sacraments widely accessible to the youth (adoration, confession etc. with open hearts).
5. Church needs to collaborate with professionals for the uplifting of youth (education, career)
6. One-on-one contact with youth to impact their life & not just waste resources on events with no impact.
7. Bishops and priests other spiritual companions should reinforce personal interactions with families & individuals.
8. To once again make an impact in lives, make a difference rather than focusing more on hierarchy, documents, organization, formalities, politics of the institution etc – as a mission of Christ.

9. A global portal / document addressing various sensitive issues thereby giving teachings, guidelines & interpretation by Pope on dealing with people facing issues like same sex union, abortion, divorce & re-marriages, female priests and other sensitive issues of the millennium. The creation of a grievance portal where people can send their issues and request help.
10. We would like to have more global meetings of young people, such as this one, on a regular basis to understand and discuss new issues arising. The youth wants a eye-level dialogue on sensitive issues, because the lack of this could drive them to give up on the concept of organized religion. God loves the youth without any bias or terms and conditions.
11. Bishops to encourage & organize youth development programs in dioceses.
12. Youth ministry preparation in seminaries to all priests in formation as part of their curriculum to equip them to deal with youth and their challenges.
13. A more interactive & informative way of celebrating mass and homily, such as dialogue during mass between priest and audience and not just reflecting on the readings/preaching, because many youth and laity do not understand the meaning of several rituals, practices & liturgical prayers during mass. The church needs to explain various mysteries in our faith and clarify various misunderstandings about worship. The use of visual aids should be encouraged.
14. Church needs to accept re-marriages and administering of sacraments to children of such couples, because they have no fault to be distanced from the grace of sacraments of Christ.
15. Preparation with the youth regarding how to deal with hate speech and cyber-bullying when they experience it.

Others

1. Adaptation of Church documents in local languages.
2. Bishops conference of countries to understand and analyze realities & situation of their youth and draw national pastoral plans.
3. Vatican could address specific issues at a given time and ask every country to address them in the form of a program at the same time i.e. opening doors to addressing social issues & sensitive matters.
4. Hierarchy and church to go out to peripheries in search of youth.
5. There must be a direct audience of diocesan Bishops with the youth of their diocese as well as other groups, bi annually or annually at least, because bishops mostly do not have a clear picture of scenarios and receive distorted / manipulated information from priests / selective information only.
6. Bishops should regularly share reflections on various matters and grievances of youth via documents and social media because youth seek answers from leaders of the church.
7. Enhanced inter-religious / inter-cultural dialogue is the need of the hour in every country to promote secular & ecumenical harmony.
8. National conferences must promote and provide activities and organizations to nurture young people holistically and make them protagonists.
9. National conferences should have online portal for job / education opportunities in their country and new emerging fields.
10. The church and specifically Bishops' Conferences must take a stand against and clearly condemn inadequate behavior in the church, such as domestic violence, child abuse or the affirmation of untrue statements etc.
11. Online courses and forums of discussion on social media to address & educate about concerns of youth.
12. Formation and involvement of parents in youth ministry, such as gatherings of family of youth to make them part of the ministry and understand the role and call of young people in church.

ENGLISH 7

Part One: The challenges and opportunities of Young People in the world today

1. The family is an essential element in the development of faith, personality and identity in the life of a young person. The Church needs to better support parents and their formation so they can provide their children with an enriching faith. Family life is complex and this can have a strong impact on the life of a young person. While remaining true to the core of the Church's teaching on family and family structure, the Church needs to be more attentive to the diverse forms of family that the youth experience today and how this affects their formation.
2. Young people have the ability to overcome difference and divisions in ways we have not necessarily been able to do so in the past and on the whole have the desire to do so through authentic relationships. We can make great changes in the world if we can find a way past these differences and are accompanied by the Church in doing so, with her guidance. In a globalizing, inter-religious world, the Church needs to not only model but also to elaborate on already existing theological guidelines for peaceful, constructive dialogue with people of other faith and belief traditions. There are however many challenges faced by young people, we think in particular about our Christian brothers and sisters who are persecuted around the world. Young people remember their Christian roots in the blood of the martyrs and while they pray for the end of all persecution they are grateful for their witness of faith to the world.
3. Young people dream of safety, stability and happiness. For some continents this is physical safety, for others this relates more specifically to a job or lifestyle. A common dream across continents is the desire to find a place where the young person can feel they belong. In some continents the dreams of young people are motivated more by an individual priority rather than that of society which reflects how they are striving to achieve their aspirations.
4. Social media is a dominating theme across geographical boundaries. When referring to technology, the clear emphasis was on the impact of social media in the lives of young people. An anxiety exists for young people around their own identity which they attempt to recreate using social media, often presenting themselves in a way online that is not authentic and which abandons social norms that are usually universally accepted. The Church needs to communicate to young people that their worth is defined in the love with which they were created. Social media certainly appears to be a domineering element of young peoples identity and way of life in these times and can be used for good if viewed in a healthy way.
5. The Church should define “technology” not inherently as a “good”, but as a neutral tool, that can be used in positive and negative ways and encourage discernment over the use of technology. We offer two concrete proposals regarding technology. First, the Church should advance Catholic Social Doctrine by issuing an encyclical or other teaching on the right use of social media and related technology. Second, the Church should address the widespread crisis of pornography and the toll it takes on our humanity.
6. Many young people have experienced great trauma in their own lives in a variety of ways. The Church needs to model healing, especially for our families. The Church can sometimes become a place of shame rather than healing and there is an opportunity to respond to this instead by showing that there is room for everyone, reflecting a different reality to young people.
7. Some young people experience a Church and society which is still very rigid in its hierarchy and roles. Within this context it is often very hard for young people to feel that they can make their voice heard while still remaining respectful to the culture and the institutional structure. The Church needs to listen to young people at every level and make room for this voice to be transformed into action.
8. Young people are trying to make sense of a very complicated and diverse world. In some countries Christian faith is a minority with another religion which is dominant. Others are trying to make sense of faith

in an increasingly secular society. There is an opportunity still for the Church to propose another 'way' for young people to live their lives, but this needs to be done so within often complicated social frameworks. In this way it is often hard for young people to even hear the message of the Gospel.

9. There is often great disagreement among young people, both within the Church and in the wider world, about the teachings of the Church which are especially controversial today, for example: contraception, abortion, homosexuality, cohabitation, permanency of marriage, pornography, and the male priesthood. Many young Catholics do not clearly understand what the Church's teaching on these matters is, or, if they do, they do not agree with them. They may want the Church to change her teaching as a result, or at least have access to a better explanation. Even so, they desire to be part of the Church. Others have come to accept or love the truth of these teachings and desire the Church to hold fast in the midst of unpopularity, turning her energies to joyful proclamation and deeper teaching.

Part Two: Faith and Vocation, Discernment and Accompaniment

1. How the person of Jesus is perceived by young people of the third millennium differs across the world. For many countries Jesus is someone who numerous young people know by name, but whom they know little about. They are interested in this person, but mainly see him merely as a historical figure and not often as someone they expect to spend their lives following. In some countries it was difficult to even find out about the person of Jesus because of their social and political context and for others it is difficult to be free to even explore who he is. In many places there seems to be a tremendous opportunity for the Church to explore further who the person of Jesus Christ of the Gospel is because of a certain level of openness from young people.

2. For many young people the idea of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ poses a level of confusion about the reality of how that looks in their lives and what it means. Some young people may be able to express their commitment to faith and the ways in which they experienced a personal relationship. Others may question how they know that it is the person of Christ with whom they are communing. For many, at this level, faith is based primarily at the heart level, rather than being based only on the intellectual. There is often not a strong connection with the ecclesial community as many young people see the Church as irrelevant.

3. There is still not a clear understanding of the broadness of vocation when the Church speaks about this concept. This is true for young people, and in fact much of the Church. There needs to be a continued emphasis from the Church on the idea of vocation being a broad concept, based on how a person is being called to love in their life. In many countries people immediately associate the concept only with priesthood and religious life and often therefore don't see how it is relevant in their lives. We desire to be a Church which celebrates all vocations.

4. There is also not necessarily a clear understanding of younger generations of having a call in their life. Unless you are strongly connected to the community of faith, it is hard to make sense of the language the Church uses around vocation. In fact, the Church's knowledge about vocation actually has much to offer young people regardless of their association with the Church or faith because of the challenges they face in a material culture characterised by apathy, discontent and lack of fulfilment.. If the Church wants to share this knowledge more widely it is likely they will need to adapt the language used around vocation so that it makes sense to a broader audience.

5. The critical moments where a young person can be assisted in making choices primarily take place at any time of transition. It would be helpful for the Church to focus on specific identified key moments in the life of a young person so they are able to assist them in those times. At this time also many young people are in a phase of great questioning in their life and at times our Church can pose ideals which appear to be unachievable and doesn't make people feel that they belong so that they can consider vocational decisions.

6. The main tools found to be useful in relation to a young person making basic life choices relate primarily to

relationships. The ability to find people within the community who they are able to talk to and gain advice is integral. The presence of role models living their life in different ways is also a strong tool. This is challenging in the context of some countries where there is a limited number of people who are able to do this. Other tools that are helpful are usually simple and straightforward resources that are made available for making good choices. Big events where young people are exposed to many vocation are also helpful. The Church needs to provide more resource for making this possible.

7. A person suited to accompaniment would have some of the following characteristics ... be strong in their own faith, authentic, be welcoming, have the time to spend with someone, be able to stimulate conversation with the young person though, be willing to meet the person where they are at. The Church needs to prioritize empowering peers and intragenerational mentors to educate, lead and witness to one another. These people also need to be well formed, including training in child safety and be accountable to the Church. The youth recognize the tendency to leave their home communities for work and other priorities. We encourage the involvement of the entire community in the formation of the youth in order to build deep, intergenerational roots within the community.

Part Three: The Church's Formative and Pastoral Activity

1. Characteristics of a Church which is attractive to young people is one that continues to listen and affirm, which is clear about who they are, what they believe and has an openness to discussion about this, a Church which is fresh and creative, honest and authentic and a Church where its leaders include a wide variety of people who are witnesses to the message that the Church brings. Finally, the Church needs to be one that helps young people to grapple with the big issues that they are facing in the world.

2. Young people need to be involved and able to share their voice and collaborate at every level of the Church's structure (parish, diocesan, national and global). Structures at each level need to allow young people to be part of the decision making process. Wherever possible, both young men and women should be working in many areas of the Roman Curia, not only those related to young people. There is also a proposal of a commission of young people to be established of members from around the world who would advise consistently the voice of young people.

3. Young people have great creativity to develop events, opportunities, ways of expressing and participating in our faith, but need to be supported by those within the Church at all levels. Young people desire to contribute and be part of the long-term vision of the Church, but need to be accompanied in doing so. The Church can also learn from other Christian communities about becoming a place of increased welcome and exploring structures where people are well connected into our local communities. For example, the establishment of small groups who meet regularly who journey together and grow spiritually. A clear line of connection through our parishes would be powerful.

4. Young people often respond well to big events (e.g. festivals, camps etc.) but also desire to build meaningful relationships with those around them. Large events need to be well run and organised in a way that takes what they are experiencing and seeking in daily life and translates this into a context that works within the Church. The language, marketing, structure and content all needs to connect to young people in their cultural context. Mission and service based programmes are also a great place for young people to encounter others in authentic ways, to serve, reflect and be formed and to grow in their faith and many enjoy being involved in such programmes.

5. The Sacraments are of great value to Catholic young people. They desire to participate in these and develop a deeper sense of what they mean in their lives. This is true of the liturgy, marriage preparation, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, preparation for baptism of children and so forth. In many places these need to be offered in a way that connects better with young people than they currently are. Time set aside for prayer, silence and Eucharistic Adoration are also often moments of great

6. The great things that are already happening with and for young people in the Church need to be celebrated

and made more visible in local communities. The Church needs to strongly consider how we communicate this message as often the Church is not particularly successful at extending this message beyond a certain network of people. The Church often relies on volunteers for this work and there is an opportunity here for more investment in this area.

7. The Catholic education system posed a variety of challenges for some of the countries who have this system established. In some countries Catholic education is of great value and leads to an encounter with the person of Christ. In other countries, despite the fact that this education is greatly desired, students can leave complete their education without establishing a strong faith and sometimes with a negative impression of the Church. The mission of Catholic education should be a tool of engagement and encounter that crosses socio-economic barriers and empowers the laity as ministers and missionaries of the faith.

ENGLISH 8

Question 1 The Formation of Personality

- Harmony in the home is positive for adolescent development. If there is conflict in the home, young people become fearful and are not comfortable or strong enough to be or express themselves
- Anecdote: a youth being brought up in a house of non-practicing Christians. When the young person wants to become involved in the Church, at here is pushback from the parents, and hostility in the home.
- Schools are the next most important place where young people find their identity, because of peer and friend groups; but also what they are learning, especially in college, where they are faced with worldly perspectives
- We are more externally motivated. We have lost sight of intrinsic motivation. We are too concerned with what people see or think about me than what is the state of my soul, or my relationship with God
- Sometimes we get our examples from priests, but when they are too rigid or do scandalous things or are acting inappropriately, we lose motivation or desire to be a part of the Church.
- Young people don't want to accept struggles, or difficulties. They want to belong to things and participate in things that make them happy.
- Some young people don't like to publicly declare their religion, out of fear of ridicule or stigma from what people think and say that we are.
- There are times in which people shame us for the choices we make or what our vocation is – we don't have a degree, we work blue-collar jobs, we aren't married, we haven't traveled, etc.
- Difficulty, struggles, trauma shape the lives of young people and influence their identity and the decisions they make

Question 2 Relationships with Different People

- For black persons, racism is a present struggle. Prejudice even from fellow young Catholics and Christians sometimes makes them afraid to travel to other places because of how they are treated.
- Violence and religious discrimination against Christians (especially where Christians are a minority religion) prevent them from living fully, and have taken away their sense of belonging.
- In the military, there is difficulty in expressing faith, out of fear of ridicule
- There is a lack of collaboration between youth, young adults, and elder generations
- Division and misunderstanding among Christian confessions makes it difficult to have relationships with one another and collaborate for the common good
- Prejudice, lack of compassion, and indifference still exists in the Church against persons with HIV/AIDS, sex workers, and persons with physical and mental disabilities
- Individualism among young people

Question 3 Young People and the Future

- Young people today want to have good jobs and make money (not in the selfish way, but as basic human needs)
- Arranged child (under 18 years old) marriages around the world prevent young people, especially girls, from pursuing their dreams
- There is a distortion in the order of human value. Achievement is based on how much money you make, and what you own. Not the strength of your character.
- Widespread poverty in many countries, prevents vocational pursuit. How do you afford the means to get what you need to succeed?
- Debt makes it difficult for young people to make much of an effective living
- Uncertainty in their lives yields anxiety and depression among young people
- Young people dream to live in peace, and seek and advocate for justice around the world

Question 4 The Relationship with Technology

- Technology gives us pleasure and gratification – it becomes one of our main sources of happiness, keeping us from searching deeper.
- Creates walls between others. We serve technology, instead of it serving us.
- We do not know how to talk with people outside of social media. We lose ability to dialogue.
- Technology has changed the way young people grow up. Recreation is different now – it is mostly digital. Anecdote: When a child cries, the parent doesn't try to speak, or hold the child, but gives them a video to calm down.
- Pornography is affecting the lives of our young people – it distorts the way they view sex, marriage, human dignity, and love.
- Opportunity: People are using technology as a tool to combat unemployment; there are new ways to enter the job market in this area, which young people are more capable of working on than others. And now there are even apps or websites that assist in helping other young people find jobs.
- Connects people from around the world, allowing us to become a closer global family
- Dependence on digital technology negatively affects childhood cognitive and social development, as well as diminishes the roles of parents
- Social media creates for us social expectations that can be impossible to attain

Question 5 The Search for Meaning in Life

- “Who Am I?” is the question we are all asking
- Young people want the happiness, but they do not want the responsibility (e.g. cohabitation, not marriage)
- Do we view our dreams or our vocations as the thing that makes me happy? What if we have suffering and pain? Do we leave? Do we feel that we have chosen the wrong vocation when we are not happy?
- The majority of young people do not search for the true meaning of life – they are distracted and preoccupied with worldly pursuits.

Question 6 Young People and Jesus

- For some people, particularly people of color and those who live where Christianity is a minority in their country, it is harder to be a Christian now, than at the time of Christ in Scriptures.
- Some people do not believe they are the Body of Christ (that they can be Christ)
- Yes, a lot of young people do believe that Jesus is God and their savior. An increasing amount see Jesus as just a prophet, or ethicist – just one of many pathways you can choose, just like any other religious code.
- Jesus is just some old person in History, not relevant.
- They see priests as a representative of Christ, but when a priest is not a good example, they fall away. Some become atheists.
- Jesus was a revolutionary, a teacher, leader and a role model

Question 7 Faith and the Church

- Common perception: “I believe in Jesus, but I don't go to church”
- Attending church or being part of the church community is a cultural norm, but not done out of “free will” or desire. Oftentimes, many young people don't fully understand why they are doing this, they just know that they have to do it.
- Many young people do not understand Jesus (or God) as fully present in the Eucharist
- Lack of radical hospitality makes young people feel they are not welcomed or that they do not belong.
- Christianity is more than just going to church, but it is something that must be lived in everyday life

Supplemental Question (from our group): What is vocation to you?

- Something to which God is calling me.

- To be holy.
- What about singleness?
- We pray first, and then seek the thoughts of friends and family - but that's not the priority, since they sometimes do not understand the ways in which God is speaking to them.
- Both the vocations to priesthood and fatherhood need the same qualities, virtues, gifts.
- Vocation, at its core, is more about who you are, not what you do.
- Vocation is a lifestyle (Micah 6:8, Seek justice, love mercy, walk humbly with your God)
- To be good in your state in life in that moment is your vocation
- Vocation is a grace, it is a gift God gives us to attain a certain goal.
- Vocation is communal, it is about others

Question 8 The Vocational Sense of Life

- There is not a strong culture of talking about vocational discernment in some countries/towns.
- There are young people who are not Catholic/Christian don't understand the concept of vocational discernment.
- Requirements to the priesthood
- When "vocation" is spoken about, young people tend to consider priesthood and religious life, and less about marriage.
 - Vocation is much broader than these three areas, and this must be stressed.
- Nowadays, this question is more practical and less spiritual (what will help me get a good job to get paid well, and less about fulfilling God's will for my life).
 - Even for those who begin with a spiritual sense of vocation, it can quickly turn to "just a job"
- Often, there is not just one specific call. You do things that you must do, jobs to pay the bills; but then you do things that give you joy, and then things that help other people.
- For women, there is a lot of pressure to marry. They are doing things out of fear and pressure, or are even forced to marry. Not given a chance to properly discern.
- We were all created by God, man and woman. Understanding of the dignity in gender shows us God's plan for us.
- Often we don't have the courage to tell our parents what they are discerning, especially when it is against the plans they expect from us.

Question 9 Vocational Discernment

- Even in the Catholic schools, sometimes the administration is more concerned with the running of the institution, and less in other areas of formation for young people. There needs to be more programs in Catholic high schools that actively support and encourage vocations.
- They need to be encouraged to act. Oftentimes, they discern too much, but never move.
- Ideas/tools: discernment retreats, formation centers, gathering of young adults in the dioceses, vocational discernment staff/outreach in each parish (not just diocese), teach Ignatian discernment (observe, judge, act), annual international youth gatherings (to assess where things are going), integrate this into seminary formation for future priests, regional/international meetings on discernment to share methods and ideas, resources for the parents on how to discuss discernment with their teenage/young adult children, documents that detail the process of vocational discernment
- Use and promote secular and rational sciences to assist in discernment: psychology, sociology, etc.

Question 10 Young People and Accompaniment

- If there is not someone who is qualified or formed to guide them in that discernment properly, they cannot answer the call.
 - Anecdote: Priest was not helpful in discernment, did not show concern for him, and this affected his confidence in his call (is this what I am called to, or not?)
- It is difficult to find one person to assist us and accompany us in our vocation, because we each have a unique vocation, and sometimes we can't find someone who has gone (or desires to go) down the same path as us.

- Priests are often too busy to sit down and accompany young people in their discernment.
- Youth camps are a strong program where you can accompany youth for a focused period of time.
- What about when you discern out of seminary or the convent? We need some accompaniment in that transition as well.
- Whoever supports us don't necessarily have to completely understand what we are doing, or have trod that path themselves
- Young adult groups outside of the church who support one another in their vocations and their careers can be very helpful in maintaining our vocations
- Sometimes just people seeing and acknowledging the potential in you is enough
- Interestingly people who have been working in the professions that we aspire to, tell us how miserable they are. They are not happy, and they can even discourage us (directly and indirectly) from going down that path.
- Someone who doesn't have too much of a stake in our decision is important for accompaniment. They are looking for the best for the person, and not for themselves
- We need more lay people to assist us in our discernment - priests are good to speak with, but we need other people who are able to offer advice to us. Sometimes the priests can give us only "typical advice." We want something more relatable.
- Even though we are the only ones who really know what we truly want, we can deceive ourselves of our own worth and we might really need to listen more carefully to the voices of others.
- Young people have found benefit in the use of life coaches, who ask us questions, and encourage us to dig deeper, and guide us along the process of our decision-making.
- Counseling or psychologist (this can be a stigma in places, but it's good not to have the biases)
- Parents are the most important role for the young people. Some cultures, the parents are "nagging" and not as consoling and do not understand how harmful that can be.
- Friends are a great way to connect with God and your vocation, when your family cannot.
- No matter what we do, God will still support us (so long as it is not sin). We are given free will and we honor God by using it.

Question 11 The Church's Manner of Acting

- Religious Orders, (e.g. Salesians) inspire young people to take part in the church community. Some of them have charisms and outreach to young people. Their music is very appealing.
 - Lay movements (e.g Focolare movement) becoming a part of person's lives, not simply in the church, but goes out and meets you where you are at.
- World Youth Day. Even non-believers are attracted to this
- The Church's ability to be open to other cultures, people, and other faiths, including ecumenical and interfaith dialogue
- Characteristics and actions that make the Church attractive and credible to youth: Youth gatherings or youth rallies, Youth camps, intercultural youth events, Church choirs, Eucharist-centered retreat, formation centers, youth sports leagues connected to churches, Catholic performing arts centers, the church's presence on social media and YouTube, Confirmation formation process, Volunteer/relief services, community development, Hospitals and schools

Question 12 Young Leading Figures

- Getting the young adults involved in the decision-making processes, including pastoral councils
- Encouraging young people to participate in Church activities, including the liturgy
- Invest in training the teens to be empowered in their church
- Empower young people to harness their skills and use them in service of the church community for just compensation (e.g. apps, videos, web design, etc.)
- Outreach to the poor and homeless
- First, it's about making them feel belonged and then empower them in that community to take some responsibility

- Before we can do any of this effectively, we need to be more aware of the trends/stats/background of the young people of their region
- This is not simply about getting the young people involved to help the church community, but ask to what the church community can do to help them

Question 13 Preferred Places & Question 14 The Initiatives to be Reinforced

- The following are places on the margins where we would like to see the Church have a greater presence: social media, internet, the pastoral care for LGBT persons, those affected with HIV/AIDS, unwed mothers, the divorced, racial injustices, more vocal on women's rights and movements, environmental awareness/care for creation, physical disabilities, mental illness, drug rehabilitation and sex worker rehabilitation and reintegration, prisons, interreligious dialogue, speaking out against political corruption, participation in NGOs, university projects

Question 15 Instruments to be Used

- Social Media
- The church must not speak exclusively with spiritual or supernatural language, but with reason and practical language as well
- Intergenerational dialogue between elders and youth is important, and must constantly be encouraged
- Affirm young people who are searching (spiritual but not religious). Encourage them in their journey in their questioning. Then pray for them.
 - Take away the strict language of exclusion.

ENGLISH 9

PART ONE

THE CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITIES OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE WORLD TODAY

QUESTION ONE: THE FORMATION OF PERSONALITY

The differences among and between the specific *realities, personalities, beliefs, histories, traditions and upbringing* of youths are several. Several of these were discussed according to the context of the participants of the group. These differences were compared to the multiple ends of one thread. The outlook and manner in which a youth confronts them, however, has a common root: the degree of formation - consistent and continuous formation from childhood through adolescence, maturity and into adulthood. The categories below are all interconnected:

Sociological

The various social and physical hardships faced by young people shape their personality, via their fears and desires.

Authentic relationships are key. Real ones, either in the family, at school, work etc.. Who one surrounds oneself with is one of the more important factors in the development of personality.

The importance to trust each others' ethnicities and differences. The lack of trust (like a wedge in the relationship) causes a division rather than unity.

Family: pressure from parents or familial responsibilities. Even those who have no safe or supporting family unit are affected in the development of their personality...the values the family transmits are crucial. In the case that this support system is missing in the development of our youth, can the Church be a substitute for this; can it step in effectively?

Importance of parents, especially the father or some father figure in the formation of the person. Male role models are key.

Educational

Education is a key point regarding the formation of personality. An individual is what he reads, and the people surrounding him or her. Education also opens doors and opportunities. Education teaches how to make balanced value judgements in an ever changing world. Here, a question was posed: What really is the goal of education in assisting us to make decisions, to advance in our life? Is it contributing to us becoming part of an impersonal society; or is it truly helping us to get closer to God, to happiness and profound fulfillment?

Psychological

Pressures from home and school represent serious formative relationships, for better or worse, placing on the person real demands and responsibilities.

Sexuality

Often spoken of in a negative light; why one should avoid in its moral manifestations rather than its contribution to the formation of our identity.

Technological

The Virtual world is a place which creates new personalities or sides to the person not seen in their concrete life. Many have noted a stark loss interpersonal skills in the world because of social media. It is sometimes as if two personalities can develop, the "real" personality and the "virtual" personality. Relationships in a virtual world lose interpersonal patience, and become judged by virtual standards such as likes, the time it takes for someone to reply to a message after having seen it etc..

Cyber bullying was a social factor noted several times by participants.

QUESTION TWO - RELATIONSHIPS WITH DIFFERENT PEOPLE

Challenges:

- Many cultures living together in the same place has created the challenge of on the one hand trying to learn from others and assimilating, but on the other hand of trying to protect and preserve one's own language, culture, religion, tradition and cultural values.
- In a multicultural world, there is a real fear of being rejected by people who hold different views to one's own.
- Meetings of divergent races and cultures can end in perceiving other racial groups as threatening, and this can be a very divisive force within communities,. It can be difficult to achieve a sense of belonging to one group as well as belonging together with other groups in a larger community.
- Identifying with other cultures while holding one's own - black vs. white, different religions, especially in countries where there is historical trauma, eg. Slavery, colonisation, genocides.
- PRESENCE: The need for attention, to know that someone is there and ready to listen and be interested in what we are going through.
- The phenomenon of insta-gratification. In a culture that promotes this sort of engagement with the world - of instant results and reactions, of quick searches - the ability to value patience in our relationships (with each other, with the environment, and naturally, with God) is being eroded, and with it, the importance of investing time in building of meaningful relationships; even of allowing a space for encounter. What is the Church without the flesh - without the fabric of what makes us human?

Opportunities:

- The ability to experience the beauty and life of other cultures.
- The ability to adopt the positive aspects of other cultures, and integrating them into one's own culture, serves to build a stronger, healthier and "living" culture.
- "third cultures" are being created, made up both of a dominant culture as well as an introduced culture (via migration, increased contact etc)
- The ability to share the goods of one's own culture with others.
- The fact that, in an open and liberal country, differences don't feel so different anymore; the chasm between cultures and languages has been bridged by contact and tolerance. Similarities between peoples have thus also become clearer. "Liquid society" is the term one would use to describe such a situation.
- Confronted by the need to belong, can the Church be seen as a "home" without walls?

QUESTION THREE: YOUNG PEOPLE AND THE FUTURE

Dreams

- To have a just society (realised by social outreach)
- To have a meaningful life and relationships, though interpretations of this differ.
- To have a family
- To be famous, known and desired.
- To be guided well.
- To be educated
- Dreams that involve short-term happiness and instant gratification are common, and exacerbated by social media and the "instant" virtual and consumerist world.
- To achieve what one sees elsewhere (especially as presented via social media), and which could be an illusion.

Other notes

- Religion rarely enters the dreams of today's youth.

- While still entertained, people are seeing more and more that material goods are dreams that will not suffice.
- What the future will look like is a real fear for the young, because the world is so rapidly and continually changing, and so full of challenges. While these problems differ between developing and developed nations, they are real and scary to those whom they affect. Developing nations tend to be more concerned with education, poverty, slavery, resource and environmental challenges, and violence such as genital mutilation. Developed nations tend to be more worried about mental illness, inclusion and bullying. Gender inequality, familial expectations, employment and the state of the natural world seem to be shared problems.

QUESTION FOUR - THE RELATIONSHIP WITH TECHNOLOGY

New ways of being/belonging in this world

Technology is a **new way to socialise** and to journey through life, but it is both a bridge and a wall. There are cases in which isolation increases due to this method of socialisation rather than decreases. Gives a platform for human interaction like never seen before.

Opportunities come with technology; we are able to hear many more voices much more easily, from people and communities who otherwise would not have access. (eg the Synod online fb groups)

Indiscriminate self-expression - participation is open to all; importantly even to those who would otherwise find it hard to express themselves in person. Technology has created an environment of unprecedented comfort.

Technology has become a place in which young people explore and express their sexuality through internet pornography, advertisements, sexting etc.

Young people have come to rely almost solely on the internet for their sources of information and intelligence.

Dual personality, virtual and real - a psychological split. The virtual world is REAL for those in it, with very concrete outcomes in the life of those who use it. But there seems to be a split between the two parts of the person developing.

Inclusion of people (with disability, for example) who otherwise risk greater marginalisation

Online relations

Technology and social media encourages some to create other personas which we present to the digital world (eg photoshop apps, fake profiles). Therefore, one of its dangers is that we can pretend to be someone who we're not, or interact with people who are not who they say they are; with something which is simply not there.

Anonymity that various digital platforms can offer can be used as a tool to see what people really think, desire and wish to know. The Internet offers a platform for self-expression and perhaps, blunt honesty, as anonymity brings with it protection from judgement etc. Flipside to this - feeling distant from a situation, from the person being communicated with, might undermine the impact that these online actions/behaviour of the user may have.

'Offline' relations

Technology has created a sort of forgetfulness (indifference?) of the exterior world, and has taken time from various activities such as sports, outdoor social gatherings etc.

One positive aspect of social media is that it can help people to be inspired by others, by sharing in their life and thought, and can help move people out of insecurity and introversion. You can be inspired by people when you follow them, see what they have to say etc. Technology may lead to beneficial and life-changing actions in this way.

Technology as a tool, but not the only one we have at our disposal. It is a place in which agendas or ideas of being in this world are constantly imposed or being pushed upon young people, even when they do not quite tally with our behaviour and actions in daily life.

Technology such as machinery and artificial intelligence put young people at risk of unemployment.

Creating new kinds of poverty due to dependence on technology - the widening gap between those who

have access to technology and those who do not

QUESTION FIVE - THE SEARCH FOR MEANING IN LIFE

The inner self of the young person does not sit/stand still. Even where there is no belief, there is hope, a wish that the transcendent existed; there is a searching, thirsty soul. People are still asking big questions; suffering, pain etc. people are looking beyond for answers to these questions.

Even among secularity, belief in God (or that there is something beyond) is quite high, and the belief that meaning in life does exist (even if one does not believe that he can know what it is)

The cry of the now can get in the way of our spiritual inclinations, desires, responsibilities... the everyday often gets in the way.

There is little silence in today's world. The voice of the world is loud and can drown out God's voice; it can drown our ability to listen. People who experience silence are more inclined to experiences with the transcendent, particularly through the signs we encounter in our daily life. Interior silence - the silence of the heart - is lacking, but necessary. There is a need, therefore, to rediscover silence, or at least, to bring silence to those who do not know it; to facilitate this experience of silence.

The concept of "spiritual but not religious" is an increasingly common expression.

Spirituality and the emotional life are often confused by today's young... A commonly held notion is that one has **to feel** something for there to be any substantive experience of the transcendent.

PART TWO

FAITH AND VOCATION, DISCERNMENT AND ACCOMPANIMENT

QUESTION SIX - YOUNG PEOPLE AND JESUS

Jesus is often perceived as:

- A just man
- A reformer
- A prophet
- A Role model for social questions, but not a figure of faith. (Not a messiah, but a celebrity do-gooder; there is a disconnect from his identity as man and as God)
- Someone who struggled and suffered with and among us.
- A historical figure, who is distant from our modern reality
- Among young Christians though, Jesus is often perceived as someone many young people can identify with: always on the move, seems to never have time to stay in one place, but has time for everyone. He also surrounded himself with friends and helpers, which is an attractive image and solution to our ever more busy and isolated lives. He is like a modern day pilgrim, traversing similar problems and situations in which the modern man finds himself.
- A friend
- Someone who is always ready to forgive and accept.
- A person with high ideals, who makes demands which are Impossible to live up to.

Other notes:

- Jesus still draws the hearts of many young people today, he is an attractive figure.

QUESTION SEVEN - FAITH AND THE CHURCH

- On the one hand, young people seem to be lacking a personal relationship with Jesus, or when they claim to have a personal relationship with him it is according to their own comfort and convenience. Relationship can fall to a certain "Cafeteria Catholicism", in which people pick and chose the qualities that they like.
- Migration is an issue for contact with churches connected to specific rites and languages, as people

can lose contact with their faith when they are displaced.

- There can be a disparity with many young people in their relationship to the particular vs. universal church. People may want to be part of particular churches, parishes, clubs, groups and activities, but may not necessarily desire to be (or feel a part of) the greater “Catholic” Church.
- Similarly, many young Catholics only have contact to the Church via movements! And thus assume that their movement or community is the whole church.
- The more people can relate with the church community and pastor, the more that they feel an active part of the community and feel welcomed into and identified with the parish.
- Christians around the world are often persecuted. Some are killed, others are portrayed as traitors, anti-patriotic and belonging to another society, alcoholics, smugglers, or “simple” to their broader culture, and are likewise blamed for a whole host of societal issues. This can make it difficult for young people to stand up for, or identify with, the church.
- In several contexts, there are many “church goers”, but not many true Christians, in terms of relationship with Christ and belief. There is often a lack of cohesion between Christian Identity and a relationship of faith.
- The faith of communities can often rely on some leader in the community, rather than the faith which they profess or the person of Jesus Christ. “Prophets”, priests, matriarchs, youth ministers etc. are all figures which can determine whether a Church is populous or not. This culture also means that young people search for leaders giving a message that they what they wants hear. Not enough emphasis on Jesus.
- People are losing touch with the meaning of basic Christian traditions offered by the church; things such as rosaries, Christmas, Easter have lost meaning in the broader world. Those who practice these things faithfully can also fall into a ritualism, and loss of meaning behind the many signs and symbols of the church.
- Many faithful young people have no access to the resources of the church (online documents etc) due to their socio-economic situation.
- Young Catholics often find it difficult to relate with the Church because they don’t understand their faith.
- The church is often seen as a building, rather than a faith community.
- Today there is a very weak sense of **belonging** to the church.
- There can exist a Break between clergy and lay, with many lay not feeling empowered or supported by their priests.
- Many people don’t understand why they can’t be accepted by the church (receive communion etc.) if they believe in some sort of God.
- Church is often seen as irrelevant to the issues of today, and the life of modern man.

QUESTION EIGHT - THE VOCATIONAL SENSE OF LIFE

- Many believe that life doesn’t necessarily have meaning, or that individuals have some special calling, but that we are the product of random evolutionary factors.
- Many young people however are responsible and action-oriented, when it comes to broader societal needs. However, this call to action does not seem personal, and may not involve goals that are long term.
- Young people generally lack a clear understanding of mission or calling. They have strong emotions and urges to do something or take action in the world, but lack understanding that this call may be divine.
- Freedom of choice can displace the sense of vocation; what I do with my life is simply what I choose to do with it.
- The sense of going out and finding oneself seems to be lacking.
- Many young people experience their vocation as arriving through desires. There exists however a confusion around true desires vs passing and emotional desires. Young people often have unrealistic desires, or materialistic and short term ones (to own, to have power, to have honour...)

- Many secular young people do see their vocation, or life's goal, as building up a better world. Many people can see this as existing outside of the church, and not involving God.
- Many young people lack older people in their life to guide them into coming to know and realise their vocations, careers etc.
- Socio-economic opportunity largely determines the scope and possibility of specific vocations and their realisation. This applies to familial situations as well (having to care for a family etc).
- Some youth however also feel that their path is set by others (school, University...) to a point, but then are challenged and afraid of the radical freedom experienced and weight of decisive life choices after this point.
- Catholic education lacks a sense of teaching about vocation and its deeper meanings and implications. In this same context, it is often portrayed only on the level of vocations to priesthood or religious life, leaving little to no focus on the concept of vocation among the lay.

QUESTION NINE - VOCATIONAL DISCERNMENT

Tools

- *Witnesses.* Seeing other people live a good and meaning life is encouraging. Good priests, good married couples etc. living their lives are the best tool in vocation promotion and understanding.
- Promoting *awareness* of discernment and vocation through the sharing of information, events, witness, education, books, social media.
- Wise people who can accompany youth in their vocational discernment who are not just priests and religious, who can share their experience and advice.
- *Prayer*, especially adoration.

Moments

- Threshold-moments like graduation, marriage etc...
- Crisis moments where everything changes, eg. death of family members
- Going into nature and experiencing the world
- Experience of and openness to the arts
- Moments of retrospection; seeing what has happened in one's life to date.
- Encountering people who think differently to oneself.

Other notes

- People need to be met in the situations in which they are found for effective accompaniment.

QUESTION TEN - YOUNG PEOPLE AND ACCOMPANIMENT

Desired qualities in a person guiding the youth in discernment:

- Should be a witness to the Gospels;
- Should be aware of the various situations in which young people find themselves;
- Should be a true leader, who stands for life giving values;
- Should have vision and foresight, with relation to the culture and the person;
- Should have genuine care for the young person;
- Should be judgement free (while not necessarily approving of wrong action);
- Should be someone trustworthy, who makes one feel comfortable;
- Needs to be able to step out of their own comfort zone, and their own ways of thinking and acting;
- Shouldn't be scared to tell the young person the truth of things;
- Should be a witness, someone who lives their message and their path well;
- Should be able to meet young people where they are at, to make them comfortable.
- Should be approachable and friendly;
- Should encourage people to find truth, rather than convey his or her convictions;
- Should facilitate rather than impose personal ideas.
- Should not dismiss or reject a young person;

- Accompaniment ought to be coupled with formation.

PART THREE THE CHURCH'S FORMATIVE AND PASTORAL ACTIVITY

QUESTION ELEVEN - THE CHURCH'S MANNER OF ACTING

A Church that is attractive to the young, as well deserving of respect and credibility should:

- Be a place which is familiar and welcoming, a second home, providing a real community, and platform for new relationships.
- Have well defined roles for young people within the Church, because at the moment, their role can seem not so defined and therefore unrealisable.
- Accompany rather than judge.
- Speak to young people and receive their input before making decisions regarding them. It should provide honest priests and listening bishops.
- Allow and encourage young people to witness to Christ in the world, rather than leaving this responsibility solely to its priests and religious. Many nations experience this in a particularly strong way, with respect to ingrained power complexes and imbalances.
- Encourage new ground-root initiatives coming from youth.
- Reject clericalism.
- Use new media and technology to convey the Gospels, in a way that engages young people effectively. *(refer to question 14)*
- Avoid being “fake”, and make efforts to pride itself on being a home of authentic, but fallen, individuals, rather than trying to maintain a pristine and stale image, which encourages a stale sort of sanctity.
- Try to overcome all prejudices in its outreach, and meet people in their real everyday situations. This includes finding ways to connect with young people in activities which interest them: arts, sports and other events. *(refer to question 15)*

QUESTION TWELVE - YOUNG LEADING FIGURES

Young people can really be involved in the mission of the church today through:

- Being allowed to have positions within the Church; that they can be ambassadors, part of bodies, associations and commissions that allow them to use their talents and grow in them.
- Getting involved in politics and civil society - both by taking part in political groups, as well as proposing catholic social teaching on a political level and to politicians. By engaging and dialoguing with politics, young Christians can shape society and the future, and express the importance and relevance of the Gospel to them on a civic level.
- Events like this pre synodal meeting, which provide open forums and discussions, and encourage young people to come together to solve problems within the Church. *(refer to question 14)*
- A renewed focus on leadership, human, pastoral and spiritual formation in seminaries and other religious houses of formation.
- Taking more concern in the area of physical and psychological healthcare: becoming educators for society on even these levels, rather than waiting for other institutions to act.
- Using their talents which are rich and many (e.g. sport, music, arts etc.) to attract more young people to live lives according to the gospel.
- Realising that the lay are also the church, and that they they share in the responsibility to go out and be the church in the world.

QUESTION THIRTEEN - PREFERRED PLACES

Important places to encounter the young and offer them the light of faith are:

- The family home, with its various challenges
- The internet, including YouTube, the various types of social media

- All physical places in which the young person may find him or herself - school, university, bars, prison, rehab, criminal and divorce courts, refugee camps, military, red-light districts, places of entertainment (theatre/cinema/concert halls/sports halls etc...)
- New spaces within the church, created as a place where young people can come to find Christ, *eg* Theology on tap, International House of Prayer etc.
- In whatever situation a young person may find him or herself in, especially tough social positions, in order to give them support in critical moments.
- At the church! Many young people are showing up to Church, and desire more recognition there, as well as faith formation opportunities.

QUESTION FOURTEEN - THE INITIATIVES TO BE REINFORCED

- Initiatives which facilitate connecting the young person to the sacramental life of the church, including: times of adoration; and a easier access to confession, liturgical formation (as a tool to reinforce Christian identity);
- Initiatives which promote formation in prayer, including: retreats; instruction in how to pray things like the rosary and divine mercy; various moments of common prayer among young people
- Initiatives which promote formation in doctrine and faith, including: Catholic youth festivals; formation workshops; publications which explain the faith in an accessible way, such as youcat; university chaplaincies; school chaplains; and ongoing formation courses which go beyond sacramental preparation like those before marriage or confirmation.
- Initiatives which promote social outreach and charitable works including: work camps; charity trips to help the local community or poorer communities; visits to the sick; nursing home visits; campaigns which promote Christian values outside of the walls of the church such as anti-drug or pro-life campaigns; volunteer opportunities within the church, which allow young people to learn to give of themselves and receive from others freely and in love.
- Initiatives which promote Christian fraternity, including: the appropriation of secular events or activities that appeal to young people in the world in general, events such as the hackathon; catholic festivals; and university chaplaincies;
- Initiatives which promote dialogue including: forums in which young people allowed to share their opinions, desires etc. with the church; and q and a sessions with priests and bishops

QUESTION FIFTEEN - INSTRUMENTS TO BE USED

Accessible approaches include:

- Presence in schools, universities and church communities offer a meeting place of untapped potential. Utilising chaplains who are genuinely excited about working with young people, who really look forward to working with them, and care for their lives and future. Married deacons?
- Using the world around young people (arts, media...) to give them the message of the gospel in a relatable way.
- Utilising the richness of the liturgy, and symbols of the church, especially Latin, chant, beautiful art etc, which lets young people encounter the otherness and mystery of God.
- Informalisation of relationships with clergy;
- The Faith itself in an instrument, and the many documents of the church which are already in existence which expound the faith can be used.
- The hopefulness of Christians;
- Utilising the talents which young people in the church actually already have and are willing to give of.
- Using social media to updating the community and promote events and vocations. Short spurts/small doses to address the short attention spans of young people.
- Using the institutions that the church already has! Using them in a more effective way and making them more accessible.
- Dialogues with young people; Q&A sessions. Young people with church leaders; as well as young people among themselves. Ecumenical and interreligious dialogues and co-operations are also important.

- Publications to inspire young people: good quality magazines etc... not long but **short**, good, informative journalistic pieces with images.
- Prayer!!!!
- Scripture and church documents being a part of ongoing lay formation.
- Powerful emotional experiences, and clergy and church leaders to not fear showing their feelings and humanity.
- Use of young volunteers. Young people want to volunteer! Use they're desire and energy!
- Using the material goods of the church to do more charitable work.
- Basic human honest etiquette: Apologising, especially to victims of sex abuse, but also for smaller mistakes: the church acknowledging that they don't know everything.
- Honesty and transparency within the church, to fight "political" tendencies in church governance.
- Open doors (already discussed)
- The presence of the Church in the volg/blogosphere... and not just in religious fields of writing.