

Joy of the Gospel – Saturday Morning Sessions

Session 3: Saturday 21st February 2015

Feedback from Group Work

Both the questions the groups discussed were based on the Chapter Two – Amid the Crisis of Communal Commitment, paragraphs 50-109 (pages 34-60) in the full text

1. In paragraphs 52-75 Pope Francis speaks about some of the “challenges of today’s world”. Later in the chapter he invites “communities to complete and enrich [his] perspectives on the basis of their awareness of the challenges facing them and their neighbours”.

What do you think is the most serious challenge we face today?

Group 1+

- A materialistic, consumer oriented, money focused society impinging on us individually and as a community.
- The dichotomy of both poverty and wealth.
- Gratitude for what we have - how we use what we have and how we express our appreciation of what we have.
- Simply expressed love and equality in every circumstance.

Group 3+

The group had a more general discussion than that indicated by the question. The points raised included:

- The commandment like appeal for greater equality and inclusion.
- We discussed that some people only wish to attend Mass as opposed to do more, but acknowledged that we were being called to be much more.
- We spoke about the human need for relationships and community and how the Church is serving that need.
- We discussed what Evangelisation means, as it is the golden thread that runs through JOTG. We recognised it was so much more than trying to convert people to be Catholics – it is living the Gospel. That can be direct evangelisation where we share the Word but also indirect, where we are changed from being in this community and its how that change impacts the wider world that is the indirect form.
- We also need to find ways to be relevant and not too much in our minds. Tying up the Word with practical action, indeed doing more to share what we have.

Group 4+

- Islamic radicalisation frightens us.
- The call to deepen our faith is a response to a personal call.
- Being part of the change in the Diocese; being open to it?
- New ways of being church.
- Not living in isolation is so important.
- We need each other; we need community.
- We need solitary, individual prayer.
- It must be difficult in employment not to toe the party line, even if the party line is contrary to Christian values.

2. In paragraphs 76-107 Pope Francis talks about the “temptations faced by pastoral workers”.

In the context of our Archdiocese, which of these do you think are the greatest barriers to the missionary renewal in the church that Francis hopes for?

Group 1+

- We have been abandoned and neglected pastorally as a diocese.
- We are and have been living with the consequences of a lack of pastoral leadership in this diocese for the past 25+years.
- This means that the pastoral formation of the laity has partially taken place but the fruits of that have not been put to use.
- Therefore we are limping along.... What a waste!
- Another problem in our diocese is that we, the laity, or Gospel centred priests have not been listened to.
- There has been a pretence of consultation but no action taken as result of the consultation e.g. “Now is the favourable time”
- There is a need for prayerful discernment and accountability.
- If we focus on bricks and mortar, we lose our vision and die.
- We are a vibrant worshipping caring community
- We need a place to gather together and Leo (our shepherd) is considering closing churches down.
- We will have Mass in a mobile van if our church building is taken from us.
- Does Leo want that?
- Or we will use the building of one of our neighbour SEECAT churches,
- We will refuse to let our worshipping community be torn apart!

Group 3+

- Keep it practical as well as spiritual
- Incarnate was a key word for us – God need to be lived and real and seen in the faces of those around us
- The genius of Women, the role of Youth and the Elderly – there were important things to say about all of these.
- Be careful we don't pick the bits we like and use them to throw rocks at the Archbishop. We have been chided to void warring between ourselves.
- We discussed the lack of opportunities for lay people and how the pope has set a challenge to clergy and people alike around this

Group 4+

- What happens if what we do does not work?
- Lay people need to be helped to be confident.
- Women priests?
- The lay people are not presently being allowed to fulfil their present place.
- Being seen to go to Mass! This can be an important witness.
- We need more confidence (paragraph 85).
- The revolution of tenderness (paragraph 88).
- Learning to find Jesus in the face of others – if we judge we may not love (paragraph 91)
- Lay people are in the vast majority (paragraph 102).
- Mary is more important than bishops (paragraph 104).

Please note that due to a range of other commitments there were fewer participants than normal. For this reason we combined into three rather than the usual six groups, hence the groups are referred to as Group 1+, Group 3+ and Group 4+.
