

Vatican II – Saturday Morning Sessions

Session 13: Saturday 24th May 2014

Feedback from Group Work

It is important to note that the people in Groups 1 and 3 joined other groups to ensure there were enough people in each group. Hence the feedback is from five of the seven groups.

Part 1: Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity

Group 2 Feedback:

Create a 'headline' for each of these paragraphs - 7 to 12. For each headline, write one or two bullet points to further explain the headline.

Paragraph	Headline and bullet points
7	<p>Within the world</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deeply living the gospel in everyday life. • This is about our daily activities and how we can fulfil our unique destiny in God through that, strengthened by Him to do that.
8	<p>Reach out to all</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To love and serve Christ in everyone regardless of creed, nationality or their need.
9	<p>Various fields we can serve Christ in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone has to share in life and work of the parish • Importance of encouraging women – the church would fall apart if women took a step back for a month!!
10	<p>Parish life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthened by the Eucharist, we can fulfil our baptismal vocation in the parish and beyond. • Necessary for unity within the parish with our priest – overcoming any dilemmas we encounter as we try to reach out to others.
11	<p>In our households</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our faith has to spread out from our families. • The domestic church as sanctuary needs to be mirrored within our parish life.
12	<p>Among the young</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our young must be involved and listened to – they are our future • Strong bonds between adults and young people in the

<i>Paragraph</i>	<i>Headline and bullet points</i>
	church are important. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Need for young people to be able to minister to each other - they can reach and hear each other in a particular way.

What do you believe the key components of the laity's role in the Church in 2014 ought to be?

- Identity – that we are known as Catholics and know ourselves as missionaries.
- Being intentional disciples living out our faith and love for all, in justice.
- The need not to become despondent – need for Gospel joy to strengthen us.

What is your perception and experience of the laity's role in reality in 2014?

- A sense of being a family in this cluster of parishes.
- Real sense of the parish as a family.
- Coming together here as a cluster has been wonderful.
- Growing awareness of people finding their place in the church.
- A sense of permission having been granted and encouragement been given to carry out their vocation.
- Awareness of the need for everybody to be involved and work together.
- Youth Group – links that are there and outreach to children who are not Catholic.
- Greater sense of unity and feeling of strength in parish helping to bridge relationships that might have been more difficult otherwise – e.g. a non-Catholic bringing up their children as Catholics; teenagers struggling with the challenges life brings.

Group 4 Feedback:

Create a 'headline' for each of these paragraphs - 21 to 27. For each headline, write one or two bullet points to further explain the headline.

Some of the group found it difficult to discuss and answer within the guidance and suggested questions of the feedback sheets as the paragraphs speak about control and order of the laity.

<i>Paragraph</i>	<i>Headline and bullet points</i>
21-22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bishops especially endorse lay organisations. • Bishops congratulate the dedication of laity.
23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Control of laity by the hierarchy.
24-25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The hierarchy controls lay apostolic work.
26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diocesan Councils to be established.
27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Church must work with the wider world – Christian and none.

What do you believe the key components of the laity's role in the Church in 2014 ought to be?

- The key component is faith
- Lay people need:
 - Education
 - Formation
 - A greater role in ministry
 - More consultation on faith affairs
 - Assist in as many ways as possible to foster community
 - Freedom of Holy Spirit to work in each of us.

What is your perception and experience of the laity's role in reality in 2014?

- Still largely lip service.
- The Church is still in transition.
- The Holy Spirit is in each of us but the hierarchy are not willing to allow Her the freedom to work.
- The laity should have the right to express opinions.
- Lay are needed as never before: the group found this a contradiction in terms as the hierarchy are controlling the laity.

Group 5 Feedback:

Create a 'headline' for each of these paragraphs - 28 to 33. For each headline, write one or two bullet points to further explain the headline.

<i>Paragraph</i>	<i>Headline and bullet points</i>
28	Training and preparation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need to understand doctrine but be able to make it relevant, adapted to the specific needs and areas where we are.

<i>Paragraph</i>	<i>Headline and bullet points</i>
29	<p>Spirituality and theology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each of us in our own life experience has a spirituality. Our life experience is coloured by our experience. • If you put them all together, that creates a wholesome, holistic picture – for the group, that brought to mind our Cluster. At the Sanctus retreat last weekend we heard people’s stories, their experiences and their spirituality. • We need to be able to be humble enough to know ourselves and our limitations as well as our gifts.
30	<p>Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In colleges and schools people continue their religious formation. It is now very different to when document was written. • Our schools and colleges today don’t have a specific catholic emphasis – it isn’t politically correct to be specific; we have to be multi-faith orientated. This challenged the group.
31	<p>Greater training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflecting on the retreat last week, how sharing personal stories can impact on people, can help us to become more aware of how God is active in our lives. • Meeting in groups like this and other groups where we share our faith is helpful. • Experience of the elderly – people’s life experience is valid right until the end.
32	<p>Centres for study</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are there. • But they can be expensive and people can be put off by that. We need to be aware of this and try to help people – e.g. provide financial support - so that people can have the formation they need.
33	<p>Holy Spirit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urge all lay people who are moved by the Holy Spirit to gladly and promptly accept their calling to minister in the Church and the world. The group endorse this completely. • We need to be open and realistic, to accept the calling of the Holy Spirit

What do you believe the key components of the laity's role in the Church in 2014 ought to be?

- To give a Christ-like example in how we live and deal with people.
- To be ready to serve in whatever capacity we are needed, bearing in mind our gifts and our experience.

What is your perception and experience of the laity's role in reality in 2014?

- Positive experience – because of living here in our Cluster.
- But looking a little further, thinking of our other experiences, we must not hold on to old ways and methods of doing things – we need to be open to challenge and change.
- Need to be really, really open to Holy Spirit in all that we do.



Part 2: Decree on the Appropriate Renewal of Religious Life

Group 6 Feedback:

Outline the method for renewal to which the Council Fathers are calling religious orders of men and women (see paragraphs 1-3)?

- Being encouraged to return to the sources:
 - Scriptures.
 - Following of Christ.
 - Roots of own particular order – each order has its own special charism.
- Council Fathers emphasised that the first reason for the existence of religious life is the following of Christ more closely – the group noted that this is calling of all the baptised.
- Most religious orders have gone back to their constitutions and updated them. The Helpers of the Holy Souls, for example, updated their constitution four years after the Council and again around 1980. They have moved from a large constitution to a much smaller one – new constitutions have a much nicer flavour to them.
- Important to adapt to needs of the world today – this includes lifestyle and the way ministries are chosen.
- Important to have appropriate training for whatever ministry religious are involved in.
- The renewal has to be continuous – ask if it is still appropriate that they are doing a particular piece of work.

Group 7 Feedback:

For each of the vows being considered in paragraphs 12-14, create two or three bullets to summarise them.

- Chastity
 - Difference between chastity and celibacy
 - The former vow taken by religious.
 - The latter is a promise made by a priest.
 - If there is to be a religious community there needs to be a vow of chastity – otherwise it would end up as a “religious” commune.
 - Celibacy, for religious, is a gift from God; whereas for the priesthood it is a promise.
 - The group posed a rhetorical question – why should priests not be able to marry **and** have a vocation to the priesthood? Why do they have to choose between one and the other?
- Poverty
 - Not to be destitute, but to have enough only for one’s own needs. Our own Holy Father, Francis, is a shining example of this.
- Obedience
 - It is important that people free to make some decisions for themselves and not have petty rules and regulations.

If your daughter or son came to you asking you to help them discern whether they ought to try to discover whether they had a vocation to the Religious life, what would be your reaction and response?

Our response would be to support them, but neither encourage or discourage. We would say: if you want to go and explore it, go; if it doesn’t suit, come back.