

Australian Catholic Church Plenary Council 2020

St Kevin's Templestowe Parish Plenary Council Open Group (discussion/process)

We invite God into our conversation because this helps us to remember that our Church serves God's vision for the world. Let's contribute to the Plenary Council 2020 together through a Listening and Dialogue process.

The Australian Catholic Church is planning a 'Plenary Council', the first in 80 years, through which all of us together can help change the culture of our Church.

The process for achieving this is "Listening to Christ by listening to one another".

"We are asked to speak boldly, candidly and without fear. Even if what you say may seem to be what the church leaders might not want to hear". Pope Francis

Let's have our say together

We asked the Parishioners of St Kevin's Templestowe for their view on the Church now and to 'have their say' via an online questionnaire through 'Survey Monkey'. 

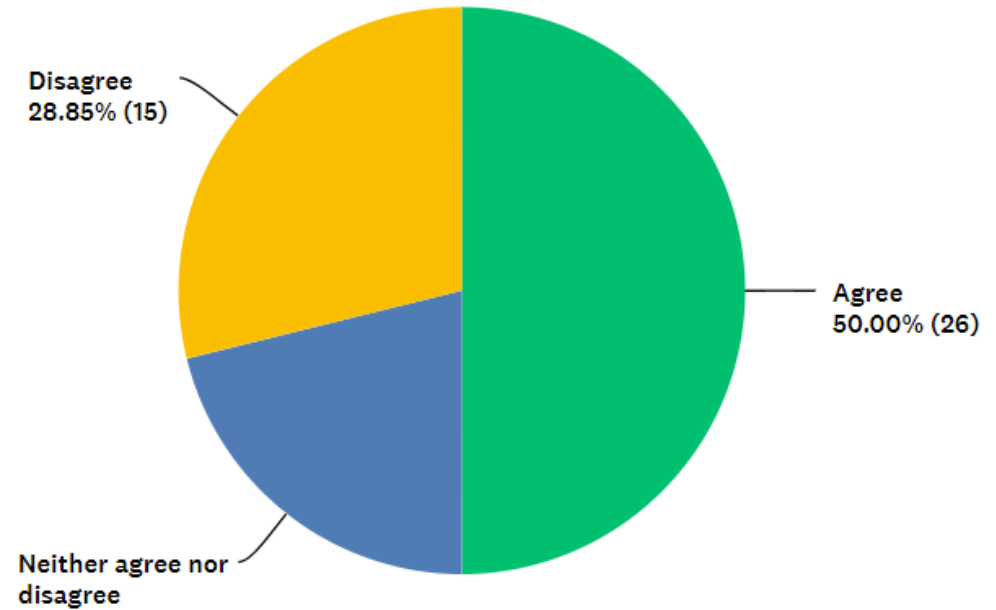
The following pages are their results and comments

Q1

A. "What does the Church look like now?" (listening to each other)

Thinking of the Catholic Church, do you consider the Church to be:

1. Welcome and inclusive



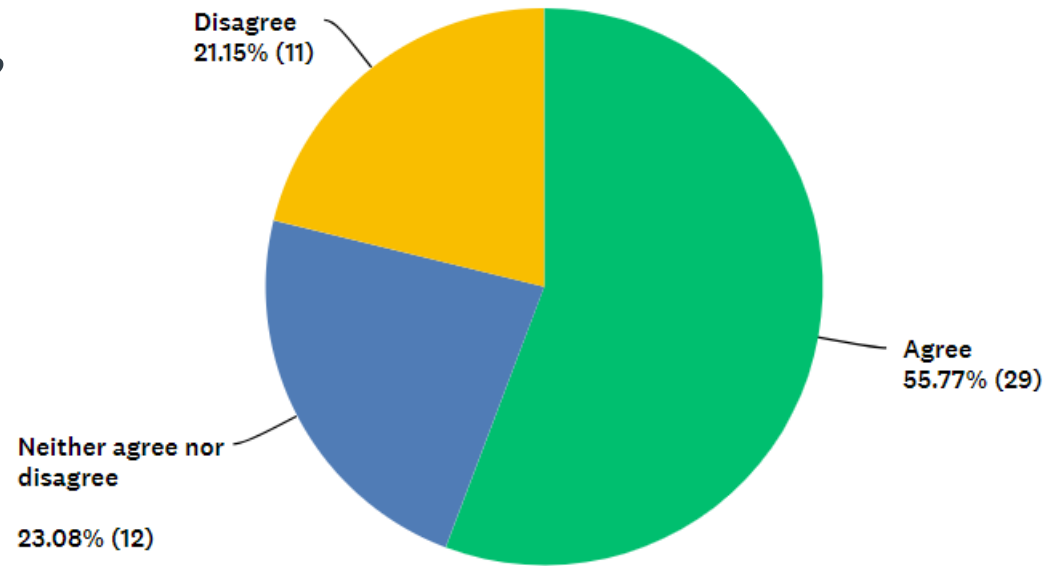
ANSWER CHOICES-	RESPONSES-
- Strongly agree	13.46% 7
- Agree	36.54% 19
- Neither agree nor disagree	21.15% 11
- Disagree	19.23% 10
- Strongly disagree	9.62% 5
TOTAL	52

Q2

A. "What does the Church look like now? (listening to each other)

Thinking of the Catholic Church, do you consider the Church to be:

2. In crisis and cannot continue
"business as usual" attitude.



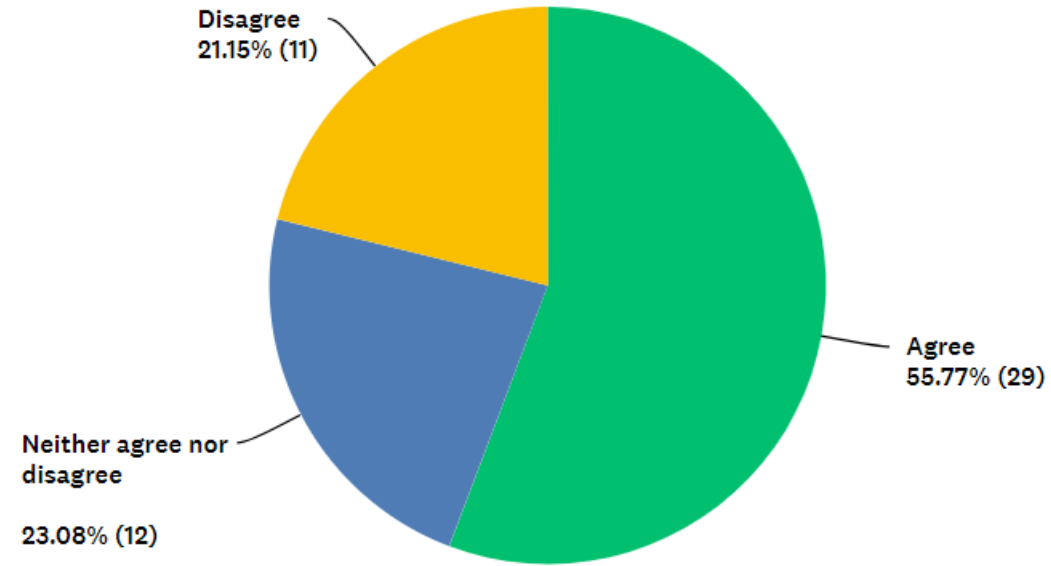
ANSWER CHOICES-	RESPONSES-
- Strongly agree	28.85% 15
- Agree	26.92% 14
- Neither agree nor disagree	23.08% 12
- Disagree	17.31% 9
- Strongly disagree	3.85% 2
TOTAL	52

Q3

A. "What does the Church look like now?" (listening to each other)

Thinking of the Catholic Church, do you consider the Church to be:

3. Open to the 'justice issues' of our world.



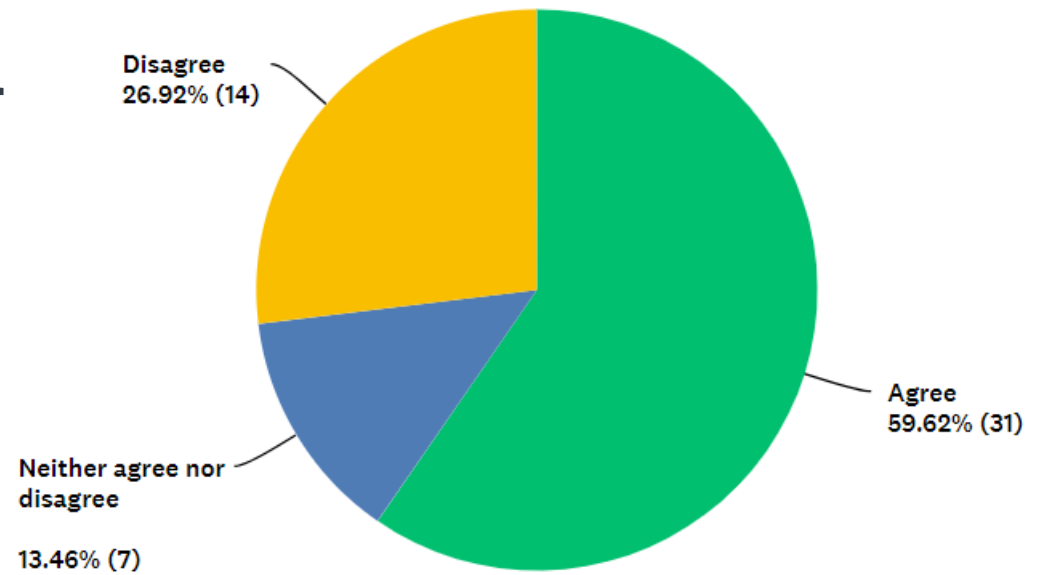
ANSWER CHOICES-	RESPONSES-
- Strongly agree	7.69% 4
- Agree	48.08% 25
- Neither agree nor disagree	23.08% 12
- Disagree	13.46% 7
- Strongly disagree	7.69% 4
TOTAL	52

Q4

B. "What is Christ calling us to make our Church today?" (listening to the Holy Spirit)

Thinking of the Catholic practice and attendance to mass, how do you view:

1. The Church is ready to try something new.



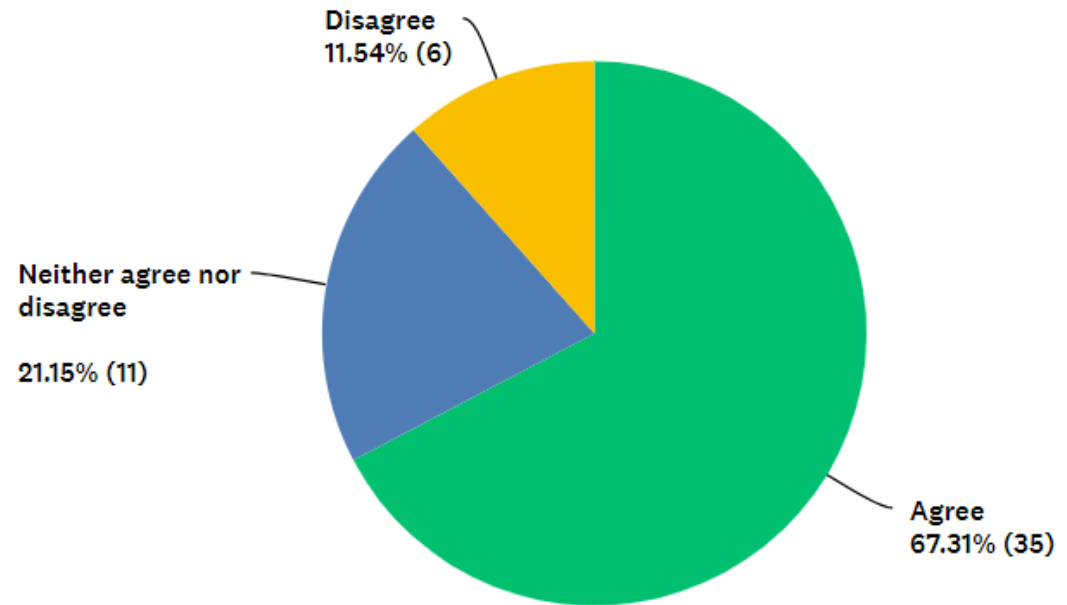
ANSWER CHOICES-	RESPONSES-
- Strongly agree	23.08% 12
- Agree	36.54% 19
- Neither agree nor disagree	13.46% 7
- Disagree	17.31% 9
- Strongly disagree	9.62% 5
TOTAL	52

Q5

B. "What is Christ calling us to make our Church today?" (listening to the Holy Spirit)

Thinking of the Catholic practice and attendance to mass, how do you view:

2. The language of the Mass service needs updating/modernising.



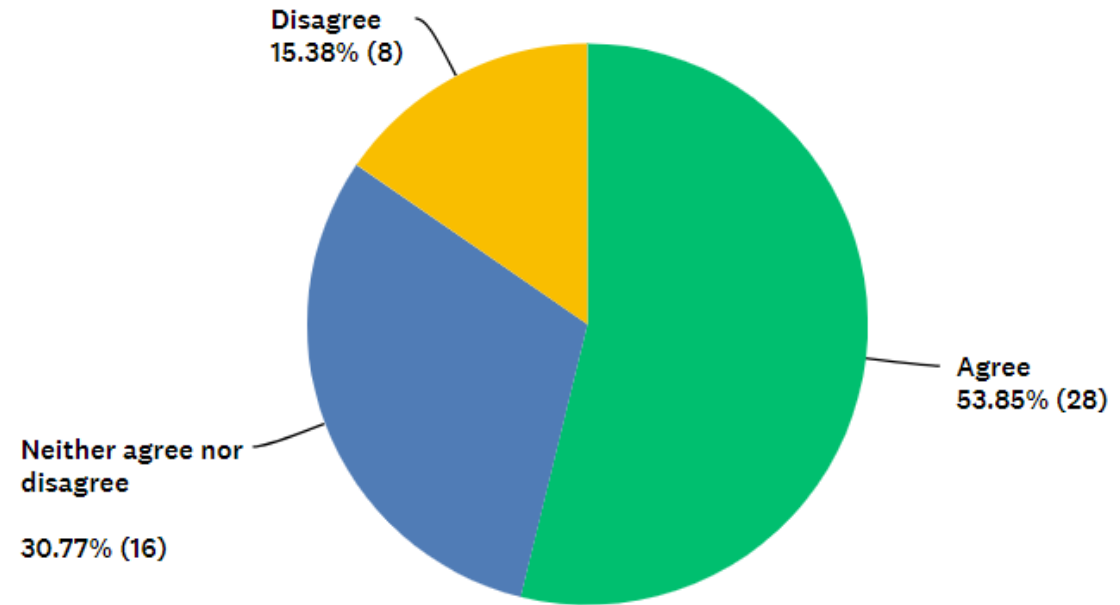
ANSWER CHOICES-	RESPONSES-
- Strongly agree	28.85% 15
- Agree	38.46% 20
- Neither agree nor disagree	21.15% 11
- Disagree	9.62% 5
- Strongly disagree	1.92% 1
TOTAL	52

Q6

B. "What is Christ calling us to make our Church today?" (listening to the Holy Spirit)

Thinking of the Catholic practice and attendance to mass, how do you view:

3. The sacraments of reconciliation and confirmation need reviewing.



ANSWER CHOICES-

RESPONSES-

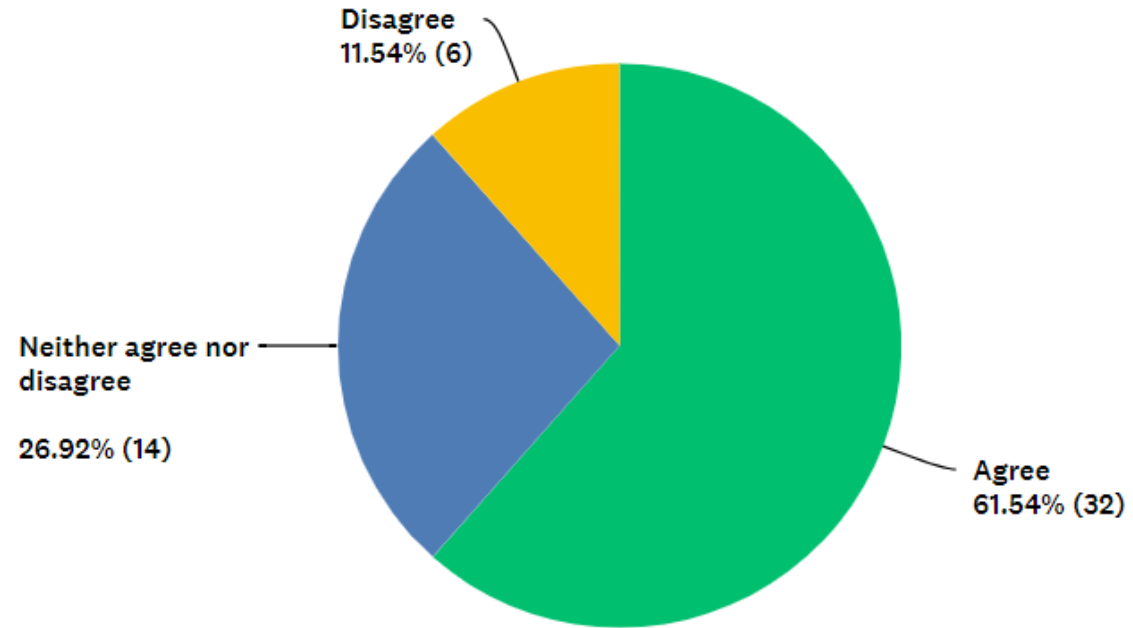
- Strongly agree	25.00%	13
- Agree	28.85%	15
- Neither agree nor disagree	30.77%	16
- Disagree	13.46%	7
- Strongly disagree	1.92%	1
TOTAL		52

Q7

C. "What do we, as Church, need to do to move from A to B?" (listening must lead us to response and action)

Your thoughts on the following statements:

1. Practical action to make our world a more just society is more important than going to church.



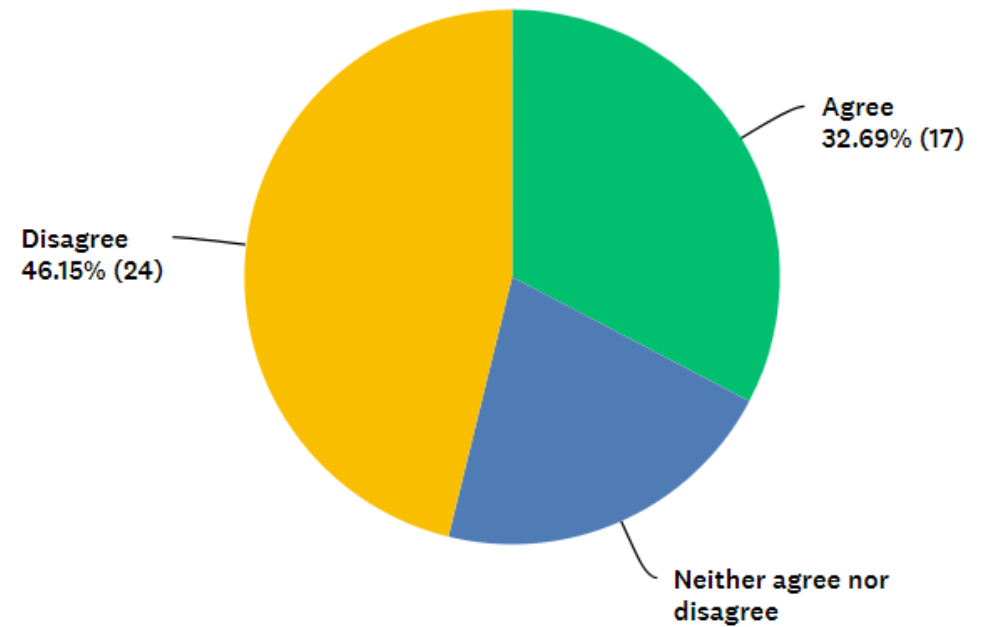
ANSWER CHOICES-	RESPONSES-
- Strongly agree	26.92% 14
- Agree	34.62% 18
- Neither agree nor disagree	26.92% 14
- Disagree	7.69% 4
- Strongly disagree	3.85% 2
TOTAL	52

Q8

C. "What do we, as Church, need to do to move from A to B?" (listening must lead us to response and action)

Your thoughts on the following statements:

2. The Church addresses the issue of domestic/family violence.



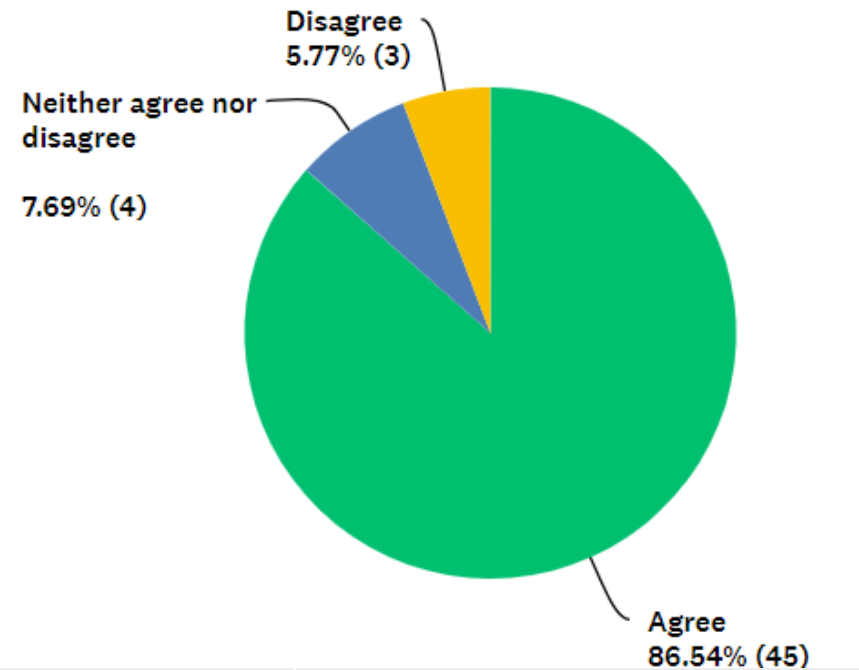
ANSWER CHOICES-	RESPONSES-
- Strongly agree	1.92% 1
- Agree	30.77% 16
- Neither agree nor disagree	21.15% 11
- Disagree	34.62% 18
- Strongly disagree	11.54% 6
TOTAL	52

Q9

C. "What do we, as Church, need to do to move from A to B?" (listening must lead us to response and action)

Your thoughts on the following statements:

3. Sexual Abuse is an ongoing concern for clergy and laity to directly address.



ANSWER CHOICES-	RESPONSES-
- Strongly agree	46.15% 24
- Agree	40.38% 21
- Neither agree nor disagree	7.69% 4
- Disagree	5.77% 3
- Strongly disagree	0.00% 0
TOTAL	52

Q10

Have your say and please let us know in your words, your response to this question and add anything else you'd like to say.

D. "What does the church need to do to reach out to our own world?"

Showing 52 responses



Needs to listen more to the laity. Focus more on the younger generation and listen to their concerns. Greater role of significance for women More inclusive of people who feel marginalised



We think that the church should look to the young. Make the Church a place that they feel comfortable, If it takes guitar playing and songs to enable them to be in the swing of things, we think that the Church should try. Otherwise there will be no one in the churches.



Relate to the people of today rather than the people of two hundred years ago; be more transparent; spend more of its massive wealth on the poor and needy and show stronger and more relevant leadership.



Major reform in the Church Structure which is currently unaccountable without transparency and extremely remote from the people it is supposed to serve. This applies equally around the world including Australia. Our local priests are by and large totally committed to their faith but do not appear to receive genuine and meaningful support from the Church hierarchy. This is left to the parish communities by and large. The structure in Australia is lacking in so far as there is no person designated as the person responsible for leading the Church in spiritual matters as well being the authoritative spokesperson. The most disturbing element of the Church today is that its credibility and trust are at an all-time low and younger people are questioning its relevance. The sexual abuse crisis has been the single most destructive issue that has brought this about, although not the only one. In addition, the Church must accept and provide a meaningful role for women including consideration of female priests. Currently in many cases the tasks whilst helpful are also menial when in fact they should be given the respect of their wisdom and intellect on an equal footing with males (I am a male!) As a practicing Catholic I hope that the Plenary Council can achieve a new direction for the remainder of the 21st Century.

- The Church needs to enter into discussion with its members to define what are their thoughts and concerns in an ever changing world. By doing this the church can relate to them and try to help them in life's journey.
- The church needs to become a welcoming body to all people and one that treats all people equally (especially relating to the role of women in the church). I feel that the church does a great job at home and abroad for the "obviously" needy but perhaps we need to do more for the "not so obviously needy" closer to home - the lonely or the parents not able to provide "reasonable" things for their children (compared with their children's friends).
- Broaden the process of plenary decision making to facilitate representatives of the whole Church to make the reforms needed for us to become relevant again As canon law stands now the people who have failed the church the most are the only people voting on the necessary reforms. We must be above even the hint of self-interest & power. Match good modern English & liturgical language. Review the sacraments of baptism, reconciliation confirmation & holy orders. Take seriously the call for a greater participation in the Governance of the Church
- I feel that the brand 'catholic' has been tarnished. I focus on 'Christianity' and teach my family to do 'as Jesus would do'
- Change the doctrine to make women equal participants of the Catholic Church. Become more like Jesus and accept the outcasts, such as gay community into the church.
- Continue to listen to the voice of the youth, continue to welcome and invite the youth into parishes as they will be our future leaders/parishioners, listen to and work closely with Catholic Schools- for many, they are the 'Church' or point of contact for today's Catholics.
- St Kevin's church is doing good.
- Speak the language of today, connect people to services they need and provide an open inclusive community for all
- The Church needs to change its attitude to people who are divorced/separated. It needs to change its attitude in relation to the role of women in the Church.
-

Change has to come from the top,! Change the Vatican! Put nuns and women in there to help make decisions. Don't be so political. Just love and help the people. The Vatican is not relevant to today's world, and it seems to be self-destructing. Don't be political, by wasting time talking. ACT NOW.



Get their head out of the clouds and be more grounded



Be more relevant to contemporary society, "Read the signs of the times in the light of the Gospel", Recontextualize our faith into the contemporary world.



God called us all to live in a relationship with Christ and with each other this is our core belief that must be addressed in a society that is just and accepting of all.



We must engage in a period of critical reflection and change the culture from male clericalism to a more inclusive one. We need to address issues around celibacy, the inclusion of women as equal decision makers and priests, issues around human sexuality and contraception, inclusion for the members of the LGBTI community, giving ex-priests dignity and meaningful roles in our church, issues around engaging our youth and the on-going fallout from the sexual abuse scandal. We must not let the 'status quo' continue. Too much pain, disillusionment and grief has been caused by our outdated culture of fear and ridiculous rules made by men. There're a lot of wonderful priests and lay people doing fantastic work reaching out to people and serving those in need. But we can do better. Thanks for the opportunity to contribute to the discussion. Exciting times ahead.



Understand how we live our daily lives is a start



This kind of thing cannot be tolerated anywhere, it has tainted the Catholic Churches 'gives some people to turn away from God. I'd rather see priests being able to have "acceptable sex relationships" in preference to the risk of this abuse & I don't see why they can't.



Run modern Youth Groups led by young and modern spiritual leaders that can connect and engage with the younger generation about activities can make a difference in today's day and age.



Make it more interesting for children to attend mass.



Become less Religious and more Cristian like just as the Bible states



Keep doing what they are doing

Change substantially

Allow priests to marry

Be more inviting to the younger generation. Mass could be a wonderful form of meditation

The church needs to liaise more with young adults and make them the focus of mass services so that they will actually enjoy attending rather than seeing masses as boring services

Be a church and look after those in need just like Jesus did;

Teams as leaders in the church. this may take the form of married couples as leaders at a Parish and beyond level.

More child friendly Help those in need

Accept diversity

Move into the 21st century. Accept gay marriage, allow our priests to live normal lives I.e. to marry if they choose and allow women to become priests

Be more welcoming of all people, deal with the sexual abuse once and for all, help make priests more relatable by allowing them to marry

Be more open to accepting the changes in our current society's beliefs regarding sensitive issues. Take the church outside into the real world and become more flexible when it comes to the sacraments, so as to embrace a broader parish community. Embrace love in its purist form so that all are welcome and no-one is shunned.

*allow the married to become a priest *acknowledge the past wrong doing and apologise *

It needs to be a haven for all where we can find healing, rest, recuperation, sanctuary and solace. It needs to be a community where we can connect with each other at other times beside the sign of peace. It needs to be outward facing, all embracing

and a listening church. It needs to nourish us spiritually, emotionally, socially, physically and mentally. It needs to challenge us to change because nothing changes if nothing changes. We are the church, every person is the church. Christ enlists the help of disciples because he knows he cannot do it all. Clericalism is a scourge that is preventing the laity from being motivated to make the church their own. With fewer and fewer religious vocations, it is incumbent upon the laity to step into the void and make the church relevant to 2018. The current priests, brothers and nuns can act as a conduit through which we can bridge the gap between over two thousand years of Christian history and make this relevant to a society that has other "cults" or religions - the cult of personality - the royals, movie or music stars, sporting icons and popular social media figures. We have the religion of politics and power, consumerism and wealth. These are all powerful and competing distractions to the tenets written in scripture. Our church needs to make it clear that altruism is rewarding, forgiving others is not a sign of weakness, belonging to a community is key to happiness and the sacrifice is necessary for the good of all. What legacy will we leave generations to come? Will it be like the Egyptians that left marvellous works of architecture or so many examples of ancient civilisations or will we be the caretakers of this planet who will be remembered as kind, generous, loving, forgiving, honest, brave and faithful.

I believe in God and Gods word, but I do not think that our church should be a business. I should be a place that when you go you feel welcome even warm. When I go to church it feels to me that the love is gone. Hard to explain but that's how I feel about the church but not the Religion.

Allow everyone in, gay, transgender etc, allow gay marriage even marriage between priests. Accept all. Allow abortion and women's rights to their bodies.

Need to have modern thinking. Times have changed. Priests don't understand what having a family and commitments to them mean. Going to church does not make you a better or good catholic/Christian.

Offer workshops on different topics that explore spirituality and religion and other interests. These would be separate to mass. Workshops could be about what has happened in the past, or could be themes the parishioners are interested in.

Instil trust back into the community

They need to stop dictating their own agendas and need to listen to what the people of today need and want. People are losing faith in the church dictators not in God!

Think like the young and be in this generation

To continue to embrace and welcome new and existing Christians into their parish

The church needs to reach out to the community, being present at sporting events, community events, being involved in the community by interacting with the community away from the walls of a church. Jesus would walk among the people, interact with them in their everyday lives.

practical outreach programs facilitated for people to engage in

The church needs to be more part of the world- go to the people, don't just wait for people to come to church.

Start treating women in a way that is a good model for our world. Our church cannot be a model for our world while it views women as unfit for certain roles. How can we expect better from everyone else if we are not prepared to lead the way.

Honesty

Open the door for female clergy and married priests.