

GORDON PARISH FAMILY SYNOD

Numbers at the end of each statement indicate the number of respondents of that opinion.

A. Fulfilling Relationships:

Topics that need reform in the Church.

- Couples living together³
- Divorce and Remarriage⁵
- Annulments⁴
- Same-sex relationships³
- Withholding Eucharist⁵
- Interfaith Marriages⁵

The Church should show compassion to couples who choose to live together in committed relationships prior to getting married.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	No opinion	Agree	Strongly agree
			2	2

Roles that the Church might have in providing pastoral care for people preparing to marry?

- Honor those who make a genuine commitment in co-habitation before marriage³
- Provide realistic guidance in pre-Cana preparation for engaged couples³
- Assume an advisory role rather than the traditional prescriptive role³

Roles the Church might have in providing pastoral care for people facing difficulties in marriages and or relationships?

- Assume an advisory role rather than a prescriptive role²
- Recognize the reality of relationship breakdown and not exclude from sacramental life those who, in good faith, have been unable to sustain their marriage⁴
- Provide resources for families experiencing relationship breakdown²
- Simplify the Annulment process⁴
- Ensure that children of divorced relationships are welcomed and treated respectfully⁴

Agreement with the Annulment process as it exists in the Catholic Church today.

Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
			1	1

The Church should allow the sharing of the Eucharist with all people who are:

Yes

- **part of another Christian denomination**
- **living in a relationship without marriage**
- **divorced and remarried**
- **in a same sex relationship**
- **in an interfaith marriage but not married in the Church because they were unable to promise to baptize their children**

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The Church can offer support to couples in, what is often called, "irregular relationships," i.e. same sex relationships, divorced and remarried, interfaith marriages, and the like by the following

- Welcome everyone who wishes to receive the Eucharist³
- Demonstrate compassionate outreach to family members in these relationships⁴
- Simplify the Annulment process⁴
- Affirm their personal right to make decisions based on a well-formed consciences³

B. Openness to Life:

Topics that need reform in the Church.

- Presenting a fuller definition of the blessings of all life (caring for the planet, just immigration laws, poverty, etc.)²
- Emphasizing the life-giving nature of the marital relationship²
- A new focus on the giftedness of women and a just and equitable treatment of them³
- Shifting the culture of the Church from fear based to a focus on love and joy³
- Supporting responsible parenthood (recognizing that when a couple makes love, they are making a marriage; not every act of love between husband and wife must be open to the possibility of procreation)³

The church has a responsibility to educate Catholics to assume more responsibility for all aspects of life rather than focus exclusively on birth control and abortion.

Strongly agree

Agree

No opinion

Disagree

Strongly disagree

2

1

World concerns we suggest that the Church adopt to emphasize our responsibilities as co-creators of life on earth?

- Care about the impact of poverty and ignorance and disease in the world³
- Clean up of our rivers and lakes and oceans³
- Finding remedies for the erosion of our land³
- Concern for the near-extinction of so many species of plants and thousands of God's other creatures³
- Critical water shortages in many countries³
- Disappearance of our tropical rain forests³

- Creating new, pure water to offset waterborne diseases³
- Immigrant rights should, as Cardinal O'Malley suggests, also be “another pro-life issue”⁴

Pope Paul VI's Humanae Vitae declared that "every matrimonial act must be open to the transmission of life."

Strongly disagree	Disagree	No opinion	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2			

The life-giving benefits of the marital relationship - beyond procreation suggested as alternatives to Church teaching.

- A unique expression of love between the couple⁴
- A selfless and altruistic giving of self to the other⁴
- A committed and loving relationship provides stability for the family⁴
- Strong love in the relationship extends to the life-giving benefits of the world⁴

Women have proven in contemporary society that they are gifted and deserve consideration based upon their skills. However, in the Roman Catholic Church, women remain second class citizens.

Strongly agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
2	2			

Suggested changes to Church policies

- Appoint women to decision-making positions in the Curia³
- Appoint women to diocesan decision-making positions³
- Respect the works of women theologians³
- Allow women to preach in their local communities³
- Allow women to become deacons²
- Allow women to be ordained as priests³

Decisions regarding the size and spacing of families should be left up to the discernment of the couple.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	No opinion	Agree	Strongly agree
			3	1

C. Gender and Sexuality:

Topics that need reform in the Church.

- Place of sex in relationships²
- Equal treatment regardless of sexual orientation²
- Equal treatment regardless of gender³
- Roles defined by gender³
- Same-sex relationships³
- Call for a new approach to Church teaching regarding gender and sexuality³

Sex is a necessary means of continuing the species but, in every other sense, it is depicted as a guilty pleasure wrapped in sinfulness.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	No opinion	Agree	Strongly agree
1	3			

How Church teachings should recognize and respect sexual expression in loving relationships.

- As a unique expression of love that brings the couple closer than anything else⁴
- As a selfless and altruistic giving of self to the other⁴
- As the love relationship strengthens, it models a profound example of love to children⁴
- As a committed and loving relationship that provides stability for the family⁴

If the Church opted to become non-discriminatory, the following women's roles to be supported would be:

- Election to decision-making positions on local parish councils⁴
- Election to decision-making positions in diocesan pastoral councils⁴
- Reflective preaching at liturgies⁴
- Accepting female deacons⁴
- Appointment to decision-making positions in the Curia⁴
- Appointment to decision-making positions in the Vatican Bank⁴
- Ordination to the priesthood⁴

It is disappointing that the preparatory document sent to all the bishops omitted the need for equality of women, a universal issue remaining as one of the most prominent issues in the Church.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	No opinion	Agree	Strongly agree
			2	2

Ways the Church teaching should modify its position on gender issues?

- Women and men must be treated equally.⁴
- All roles currently held by men have the potential to be occupied by qualified women.⁴
- Gender neither defines the roles nor the tasks that people are capable of taking on either in the Church or in society.⁴

In order to become a sensitive, loving pastoral presence in the world, the Church has a responsibility to recognize the signs of the times, particularly as it relates to same-sex relationships, and to implement changes based on the contemporary developments in science, psychology, biology, and the humanities.

Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	3			

Extent of agreement that same-sex relationships is a "disordered state.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	No opinion	Agree	Strongly agree
1	3			

The love that one person has for another is a gift from God and deserves to be recognized as a call to a loving relationship regardless of sexual orientation.

Strongly agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	3			

It's difficult for a family to "preach" non-discrimination to its children when the Church's behavior is discriminatory and prejudicial in many ways.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	No opinion	Agree	Strongly agree
			3	1

Our Church must seek new ways of expressing tradition regarding gender and sexuality compatible with the Gospel and the norms of our society.

Strongly agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	3			

D. How the Church Learns and Teaches

Topics that need reform in the Church.

- All are part of both the learning and teaching Church³
- Need for an ongoing exchange between bishops and the faithful²

The faithful's only role is to listen while only the Church can teach.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	No opinion	Agree	Strongly agree
2	1			

All of the People of God – bishops, clergy, religious, lay men and women – by virtue of baptism, should become part of a learning and teaching Church, discerning together what we have to do to bring the Gospel up to date and make Church teachings relevant for our times.

Strongly agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2			

If the teaching of the Church does not fit my values and experience, such as the Church's teaching on birth control, I believe I have a responsibility to allow my conscience to take precedence over the teaching.

Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
2	2			

Dialogue should become an institutional tool for building relationships to solve problems.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	No opinion	Agree	Strongly agree
			2	1

To formulate valid Church teachings, the Church must responsibly listen to the faithful and honor their lived experiences.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	No opinion	Agree	Strongly agree
			1	2

Bishops must create opportunities for dialogue with all forms of families - divorced and remarried couples, same sex couples and families, couples in interfaith marriages, couples living together, and the like.

Strongly agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2			

Bishops must create systems and structures for dialogue within dioceses to discuss relevant social teachings that meet contemporary needs.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	No opinion	Agree	Strongly agree
1			1	1

To acknowledge the lived reality of families today, the Church must include a broad spectrum of families (not just bishops and clerics) in the 2014 and 2015 Synod gatherings.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	No opinion	Agree	Strongly agree
			1	2

The invitation for families to participate in the Synod should be the first stage of an ongoing exchange between bishops and the faithful on a wide range of contemporary issues.

Strongly agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
2	1			