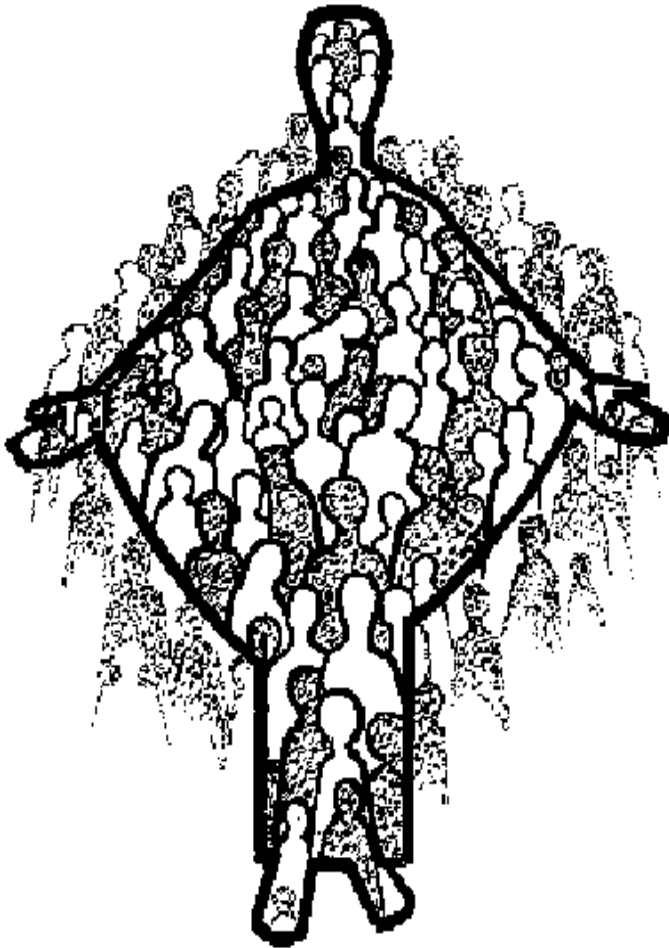


Diocese of Menevia



**A
DIOCESAN DAY
ON THE
LAITY**

*A report of the meeting held on
20th November 2004*

Introduction

On Saturday 20th November 2004 a Diocesan Day on the Laity was held in Swansea. This report summarises the main points raised by delegates in a questionnaire circulated on the day.

Background

The day was organised jointly by a working group of Menevia Pastoral Council, and the Catholic Men's Society. Its purpose was to look at the role of the laity; at what various organisations and groups in the diocese are doing and why; at what is happening in other parts of the country; at the challenges facing us; and at how we can share our visions on the role of the laity; to reflect on our vision and mission; to determine how we could support each other and encourage each other in our work, and then to act on the reflections on the day.

Invitations had been sent to all parish priests inviting them and their parishioners to the event; to religious sisters; Catholic Secondary Schools and to organisations and societies in Menevia. More than a hundred delegates attended the event. In addition Bishop Mullins wrote personally to all those who had attended the Synod in 2000.

The day started with Mass in St Joseph's Cathedral. In an inspirational homily Bishop Mark stressed that the day was an important day in the life of our Diocese for the Laity in that all of us have the privilege of responding to Christ's invitation to be fruitful bearers of his Good News. He considered that such an invitation to a more dedicated life is a very challenging one and demands that we

have a caring and committed heart. Indeed, Christ's work demands total commitment in small things done daily. He wants all of us to be part of his saving mission. **We are his hands, by the work we do, his tongue by the words we speak, and his feet by the places and peoples we visit.** All have a part in the mission and ministry of Christ on earth. Bishop Mark called on us all to listen for God's voice in our lives; to the small still voice of God, telling us what we should be doing to enlarge his Kingdom.

After Mass delegates met in St Joseph's Primary School. In his welcoming remarks, Bishop Mullins recalled the inspirational days spent at the Diocesan Synod in Lampeter when one of the topics discussed was the role of women and men in the Church. He noted that together, we are the Catholic Church in this area, with responsibility for being His witnesses, and to make this family a family of God and a people of Christ. He hoped that we would spread this awareness into the parishes and homes of the diocese.

The morning session was chaired by Mrs Gina Smith who introduced the first speaker Jackie Wykes. Jackie spoke on the Church's teaching on the role of the Laity, focussing especially on *Lumen Gentium*, the Decree on the Church, of Vatican II, written in 1965, which established the basic principles of the role of the laity. She drew attention to the emphasis in the chapter on the Laity in *Lumen Gentium* on working together, with the hierarchy – the clergy- of co-responsibility, not of any idea of 'taking over', but of Collaboration in the mission of the Church. Jackie referred to the Extraordinary Synod of Bishops in 1985, which emphasised the vision of the Church as our sharing in the life of God. From this

communion comes our Mission – as the baptized, we are each sent, by God to proclaim His love and truth in our world. This mission ...is therefore the work of the whole Church, priests and lay people alike.

The Extraordinary Synod of Bishops led in turn to *Christifideles Laici*, Christ's faithful people, an Apostolic Exhortation from Pope John Paul II. This was an encouragement, an urging of us, to take action, to become active and responsible workers in the mission of the Church. Both *Lumen Gentium* and *Christifideles Laici* emphasise that Vocation is something we all have. We used to think of vocations as meaning only the priests and the religious; no, we all have a vocation - a calling from God to whatever He wants us to do. In particular, the documents insist that we all have a Vocation to holiness - and this is linked with Mission and with Responsibility in the Church.

Christifideles Laici reiterates what Vatican II said, that lay activity within the Church is so vital that where it is lacking the ministry of the clergy cannot be fully effective. Summing up, Jackie commented that the key words are: CO-OPERATION, MISSION, RESPONSIBILITY AND PARTICIPATION. We must take an active part in our Church; we cannot leave our priests, who are already over-worked, to shoulder the whole burden. I hope Bishop Mark will not mind me quoting his words in the sermon he preached this morning; 'Christ's work demands total commitment ... It cannot be left to any one set of people, be they priests or deacons'.

Jackie's presentation was followed by a joint presentation by John Smartt and Ian Easton, national officers of the Catholic Men's

Society (CMS). They looked at two aids for discussion groups that the CMS had published – *The Future of the Laity*, and *Vision and Mission for the Future of the Laity*. These had been prepared as tools to show people that they have a role to play, and are aimed at as wide a debate as possible.

John summarised each of the bulletins that comprised *The Future of the Laity*. He noted that priests must be prepared for teamwork to be carried out with the lay faithful; that some priests should be set aside for the formation of the laity; and the importance of identifying those, especially young people best suitable for collaboration within parishes. John then stressed the importance of learning from the mistakes of the past but also taking the best and projecting this best practice into the future. He spelled out the problems of a northern parish which suffered a shortage of priests. He asked how the hurt at the loss of a parish priest is to be tackled; what should lay people do; are they empowered, and how can the role of the laity be redefined? One bulletin in particular dared us seize the potential for creativity, and to construct a way forward in which the ministry of the laity is not an add-on, but at the core of everything that we do and say.

Ian Easton looked at *Vision and Mission for the Future of the Laity*, and at what is happening elsewhere, including abroad. He emphasised the importance of having a positive approach and to overcome barriers. Many of the papers in the booklet were thought provoking and challenging and but they could provide no ready answers.

Both prior to and after a splendid buffet lunch prepared by the ladies of St Joseph's Union of Catholic Mothers, a cross section of organisations in the diocese were given the opportunity to make presentations on their work. Display boards also illustrated the breadth of work of the organisations and societies in the diocese.

Following the presentations, the afternoon session took the form of an Open Forum, chaired by John Smartt. To stimulate discussion John had prepared and circulated a questionnaire to find out what points participants would include in a statement of Vision and Mission of the Laity; what the barriers would be to achieving this vision; what help individuals and groups could offer to others; and what actions could be taken back to parishes and groups following the days discussions. (Appendix 1)

Responses

Altogether, 67 participants responded to the questionnaire that was distributed during the final session. This section summarises these responses, whilst Appendix 2 itemises the comments made.

1. Some of the main points that delegates felt should be included in a statement on the Vision and Mission of the Laity:-

- General Mission statements: some of the general comments provide useful food for thought:
'To be given freedom to fulfil mission they feel Christ has given them; be creative in their mission; work collaboratively with clergy and laity to achieve our mission; actively participate in bringing God's kingdom on earth.'

'Commission through baptism; co-operate and participate in the mission of the Church in Menevia through action and prayer; making best use of the current structures and with a view to future possible developments.'

'This must contain very strong elements of mission responsibility, collaboration, commitment and charity.'

'Being disciples of Christ; Holiness of life; Formation; evangelical life; Church/Group – training (specialist groups. Being familiar with Jesus of the gospels and applying his experiences to our own and following the direction. BIBLE BASE EDUCATION. Awareness (seeing) Evaluation (judging); Participation (acting).'

'The need for real collaborative ministry to encourage an active, evangelising laity, rather than a passive 'speculating' laity. This may initially involve some creative conflict to achieve a result.'

'A parish based promotion of the study of Christifideles Laici resulting in the laity fulfilling its mission by full participation in all parts of parish life (including liturgy); developing awareness of the social teachings of the church to enable it to evangelise the secular world.'

- The role of Lay people: It is important to recognise the valuable contribution that Lay people can make to the work of the Church. Lay people themselves must accept their responsibilities and become more involved in the life of their parish and diocese. They must use their talents in the service of the Church. There is a need for a real collaborative ministry, with the laity having an increasingly important role as we face a shortage of priests. A key element is the involvement of young people in the life of the Church.
- Groups and organisations: The important contribution of groups and organisations within the diocese was generally recognised. There was a call for more support for groups and for more volunteers, with the encouragement of young and old alike to participate. More co-operation and sharing was called for amongst the various groups including the suggestion of one umbrella group. There was some surprise at the number of groups and organisations in the diocese and of the work they do. Guidelines on what groups should do were called for.
- Communication: delegates recognised the importance of communication and the need to reach out to the wider community. The public need to be informed about the real nature of issues such as abortion and euthanasia. Within the diocese there was felt to be a need for improved communication between priests and lay people.

- Training and education: there was a call for professional training, education and formation to enable lay people to take a more active part in Church life. Other suggestions included the study of *Christifideles Laici*; and the education of priests and lay people to accept lay participation.

2. Reflecting: main barriers to achieving the vision.

Several suggestions were made for the barriers to achieving the vision. These included apathy, non-collaboration, fear of change, lack of commitment and the problems of rurality and accessibility.

- Fear of change: a number of respondents felt there was a reluctance to change or accept change. There was criticism of the conservatism of many of the clergy who have a fear of 'letting go'.
- Non-collaboration: clergy were blamed for an authoritarian approach and consequent lack of delegation. It was suggested that this might stem from a 'power complex' amongst certain clergy; a lack of trust some clergy have for the laity; and an ignorance of the abilities and capabilities of the laity.
- Apathy/lack of commitment: The laity themselves must bear their responsibilities. They must overcome their apathy and recognise that 'everyone is important and vital to the Catholic community'. There is a need to enthuse people and get them to participate. It is suggested that this unwillingness

to participate is linked to the pressure of family ties, lack of time, work commitments, financial constraints and even selfishness.

- Lack of confidence: It may also be that there is a lack of confidence amongst the laity. As one delegate commented, there is ‘a lack of self-confidence, uncertainty about ability, fear of help being rejected.
- Lack of awareness of role: Many lay people are said to be unaware of what their role should and could be. There is a need for more information and better communication within and between parishes. Linked to this is a call for training.
- Rurality and accessibility: Some respondents felt that the geography of the local area and the isolation of some parishes was a problem; especially as it was considered that diocesan activities are focussed on Swansea.

3. Overcoming the barriers

There were several suggestions for overcoming the barriers, amongst them prayer and action – ‘Go for it!’

A minority view criticised the groups. It was argued that there are too many groups, and they tend to weaken the focus of the parish; and also that there was too much emphasis on groups, when the need is to enlist the ordinary parishioners. One delegate felt that ‘even if

we all were members of good organisations, we would not necessarily be an alive evangelising part of the body of Christ.’

Most however, wished to see the promotion of groups as a key means of overcoming barriers:

- Promotion: Delegates called for identifying the need for and the setting up of new groups and organisations in parishes. Existing groups are urged to advertise more widely their existence, making literature available, and through making presentations in parishes.
- Youth involvement: As one respondent called for ‘anything that can help young people into active participation’.
- Outreach: Groups should visit parishes to help set up new groups. Groups from Swansea could perhaps help in the training of potential members from rural areas.
- Networking: Groups should work closely together in parishes, meeting regularly to share experiences, and to avoid duplication of work.
- Communication: Groups can use the Internet for example to promote their activities.
- Financial support: The Finance Committee is urged to provide funding for training for counselling, catechetics etc.

4. Actions that delegates will make as their target for the next six months.

There were several ways that delegates felt they could contribute. Some proposed prayer and action – ‘pray and do all you can to help where needed in different ways’; another suggestion was to become more aware of what is going on in the parish; or to be more positive and think of others.

A variety of suggestions was offered regarding the work of groups in the diocese. Some resolved to continue to link with and support groups, and to meet with other organisations and churches; or to promote the work of their groups by encouraging membership; by advertising their group’s existence on their parish website; or by helping with financial support. Others wished to find out more about the work of groups and organisations, which might include inviting representatives of groups to speak in their parishes, and to start new groups.

The importance of greater involvement at the parish level was also recognised. Some wished to become more involved – and now had no excuses for opting out. Several felt the need to tell others about what they had learned during the day, including their priest and other parish members, or to encourage their priest to announce and explain the meeting and prepare handouts. Parish meetings were also suggested. Other positive actions included visiting the sick and lonely; producing a parish website, encouraging the study of *Christifideles Laici*; and finding missing families.

5. Ways in which actions in the future can be shared.

Delegates had several suggestions for sharing the fruits of the day and their proposed actions:

- Awareness of role: One call was for the laity to take responsibility for our Church and not leave it to priests. Another felt that the bishops and clergy must show the will to change and to include lay people more. Several delegates called for ‘deeds and action’; ‘positive action notices’; putting into practise what had been learned during the day, and to ‘get cracking – action!’ At one level parishioners must be made aware of their responsibilities and their gifts, which can be used, for the benefit of the Church. Yet as one delegate observed, we need to ‘Spread the news! – the laity are eager to help’.
- Networking/ Sharing: What had been learned needed to be shared, to ‘tell, tell and tell again!’ This might be done simply by talking to family and friends, or with fellow parishioners. It could be referred to from the pulpit or in parish newsletters. Ideas might be exchanged with other parishes. More faith sharing within and between parishes was called for.
- Diocesan days: The need for more frequent meetings that bring the diocese together was suggested. More such days were called for, though not always held in Swansea. These might have a more limited focus possibly different themes;

more youth participation; the discussion of common problems, and with more time for sharing, and discussion.

- Groups: Suggestions were wide ranging, and included the setting up of new groups, and inviting speakers from different groups to visit parishes; the promotion of existing groups to get more people involved; better support for the youth; for groups to work together and for the training of groups in various areas.
- Communication: More use needs to be made of the Diocesan website and the *Menevia News*. It was suggested that groups post news and contact names and numbers on the website, together with regular progress reports.

Alan Randall
April 2005

Appendix 1

A DIOCESAN DAY ON THE LAITY

**QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION GROUPS (GROUP
No. __)**

Spaces are left for entering your main points - Please return this sheet at end of session.

1. Sharing: Following the presentations you have heard today, what main points would you include in a statement on the Vision and Mission of the Laity?

2. Reflecting: a) What do you consider are the main barriers to achieving this vision?

b) How can you utilise the work of other groups you have heard today to help you overcome these barriers and what help can you or your group offer to others?

3. Action: a) What action(s) will you make as your target for the next six months back in your parish or group, following today's conference, to bring about the vision and mission of the laity?

b) In what ways can the fruits of this day and your actions in the future continue to be shared across the Diocese and beyond?

Appendix 2: Responses

1. Sharing: main points to include in a statement on the Vision and Mission of the Laity?	2. Reflecting: main barriers to achieving this vision?	b) How to overcome these barriers and help others?	3. Action: a) What action(s) will you make as your target for the next six months	b) Ways to share actions
There are lots of very positive groups that are spreading Christ through DOING – Rainbows etc but centred in Swansea/Cardiff/Llanelli. VISION spread it to ALL the diocese.	Distance from Swansea and between churches; lack of priests.	Swansea groups to invite interested members in the more 'out of it all' parishes to train them so they can bring them to their parishes.		
An enormous amount of good work being done by societies. Is this dependent on our parish communities? Do our lay society members feel excluded?	General unwillingness of people to commit. Is this applicable to our parishes?			
To be given freedom to fulfil mission they feel Christ has given them; be creative in their mission; work collaboratively with clergy and laity to achieve our mission; actively participate in bringing God's kingdom on earth.	Authoritarian approach of clergy who don't like to work in a collaborative manner.	Laity networks, encouraging, supporting laity networks.	Continue to link and support other groups; both clergy and laity, who support a 'working together' vision	Via Menevia website – each speaker put a small write up there along with contact names and phone numbers.
One cannot support everything which has been said today; the choice is yours, to support as long as you can give 100% support.	Family ties commitment; not enough time to give support.	Sometimes groups can work better than individuals	Helping the charities to help themselves financially by selling Derby Draw tickets.	
To listen to each first and foremost. Have a oneness with each other within the Holy Spirit. Then go, do. Get to know your parishioners.	Its possible that it's a small parish so those within are doing as much as they can.		My mission is to be more aware of what is going on in the parish.	
Welcoming	Reluctance to change- fear of letting go.	Sharing and supporting where most needed; small communities.	Get more involved in parish involvement.	Befriend; follow up from Rainbows a form of support for the young in each deanery.
Open-ness; everyone valued.	The main barrier is apathy. The same people always get involved-how do you enthuse others. We are lucky to be served by CMFs who live and work in community where everyone has a part to play. Diocesan priests should take example.		The bishop could visit all parishes and speak briefly on the value of the laity.	There should be a month's concentrated activities to enthuse future participants.
We want to do things but the priest won't let us.	Money; commitment of parishioners.	Get Faith and Light started in your parish.		

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Today's groups are very positive; good work being done; is there a fear of commitment to Christ's work? E.g. more volunteers needed but family life important – time spent with own family.	Possible commitment; not being valued; communication and working together laity and priests.	Financial support always needed; commitment certainly needed.	Music – sing (parishioners)	Spread; communication – meetings- priests- parishioners feedbacks to next meeting of Laity. Visit parishes.
Active support of the parish; spiritual development.	Structure to organise and support by activity; apathy- difficult to mobilise people to more than Sunday Mass.	Learn more about work of CMS with respect to the role of Laity in the changing Church.	Work to develop Marriage care across the diocese.	Relevant communication with parishes. Check link of Marriage Care with Diocesan website.
Collaboration; keeping the best from the past; having or agreeing to a clear vision of how the future will look; setting clear aims and objectives; sharing experience and reflecting with others – parish deanery, diocese.	Reluctance to change; fear of letting go; we have always done it this way; not listening, especially to young people.	Small communities; praying together; share experience; involve youth and young people.	Meet with other organisations and other churches; create a sense of belonging for all people.	Invitations from centre to deaneries and parishes; communications to begin with meetings and listening; support one another; encourage small groups; pray for one another. Take small and true steps.
Communication between clergy and laity; cooperation; active participation; acceptance of responsibility for the 'success' of a parish.	Lack of two-way discussion between clergy and laity; lack of understanding of the situation; being reticent to take part or strike out.	CMS have a great deal to offer	Meet with members of parish to explain today and get feedback. Maybe invite input from other groups.	
Rainbows; need for helping to understand children in this area. The SPUC organisation.	Not enough understanding of the situation; lack of education as to how to deal with these problems as and when they arise.	Get those involved with these organisations to understand more about the work they do and be tolerant to them.	Speak with my priest about today to see if in some way groups can be brought together to pull for the same goals.	By working together as groups in our parishes and getting together from time to time to discuss where we are at and plan our future together.
That each member of the parish has a duty to share their particular gifts within their parish in any way. In small ways or big ways.	Lack of confidence; apathy congregations seem to be getting older. Not many young people.	Try to get the young involved.	Let people know what was discussed today.	Communicate with others and keep all our hopes in our prayers.
The laity is everyone in the benches – all should feel needed and involved – we are the Church.	The burden of history – attend Mass and give financial support – no need for more; busy pagan lifestyles all around us; people feel unprepared, lacking knowledge;	Much impressed by the first two talks – role of the laity and CMS	Try to do something for spirituality participation.	Another day next term – a more limited focus, perhaps youth participation, more time needed for sharing.
That all the laity realise they have a role to play and no role is too small.	Apathy also elderly thinking they are too old or not well enough. Young people having other interests.	Advise others of their existence	Discuss today's meeting with others.	Prayer, communicating with others and encouragement where needed.

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Commission thro baptism; co-operate and participate in the mission of the Church in Menevia through action and prayer; making best use of the current structures and with a view to future possible developments.	Lack of information or experience; perhaps bad experience.	By reading their literature and listening to members of the groups talking about how they see their roles in the mission of the Church	Spread the word about today's conference; start small, small secure steps; persevere.	Invite reps of different groups to come to parishes to speak to them.
Reach out to all members of the diocese not just our own particular society and parish.	We need inter-parish communication in order to achieve a greater understanding of each parish's problems and any communality.	Ask for presentations to be made at Masses in the diocese or details to be given of help by these organisations included in the parish newsletters	Speak to my parish priest.	More meetings between parishes (like this one!). But more time for discussion. Each person to report back to his/her parish what they've learned from other groups. Ask Sr. Josephine to give a talk on Rainbows to the parish.
More about Family life How can we help those in need.	People not coming forward always leaving everything to the few people who are willing.	We should meet more with other groups to know what they are about.	Speak more about what we can do to help others get involved and listen. Get the Youth involved.	If we are kept informed
There is a challenging opportunity for our parishioners to live out the Gospel values actively in their daily lives through more involvement in the voluntary groups.	People are unwilling to get involved; work commitments; lack of confidence.			Through Menevia News; the Internet; giving presentations in parishes use similar model to today's to get groups sharing together.
Caring for less fortunate members of the local parish; catechism; protest and education of others on moral issues; liturgical and musical ministry	Selfishness; financial; busy lives and jobs; other interests outside the church; lives not centred on God.	Prayer; Rainbows – excellent organisation; social sides/support; fund raising; meetings throughout year; Youth SVP.	Parish meetings on how to improve, start new groups within the parish.	Tell people about different groups; get more involved; need to set up youth groups in every parish to allow young Catholics to meet each other and provide support when their values are so much at odds with those of society at large.
Need for professional training; need for education/formation.	Lack of trust some clergy manifest towards the laity.	Groups have to demonstrate to each other and to the clergy that they are responsible.	Nothing else	More frequent bringing together of the diocese.
Study of Christifideles Laici; Marriage Care including Rainbows; faith and Light – respect and acceptance of difference.	Fear and non-commitment.		Marriage Care – preparation and Music	Spread Rainbows – try to encourage men to form CMS; listen to parishes; Diocesan website?

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Some means of informing public of real nature of euthanasia, abortion etc	Isolation both in parish and in wider community.	The main problem is isolation as perceived whether real or imaginary. Community gathering intercommunication; liturgy, whatever, being together with like-minded people makes things seem much easier to implement. Society of St Gregory – liturgy.	Choir or similar. Be more sociable.	The essence of all this is that a parish must have genuine love, friendship and sociability, otherwise you can't even start. Part of the aim of liturgy should be to encourage this.
Co-operation and sharing amongst all groups and associations, working together as one team for the Church.	Apathy, lack of confidence and lack of commitment.		To share what I have learned today.	By prayer.
Realise your potential. Be confident and 'Go for it' with the Lord.	Apathy. Perhaps living in isolating areas.	Smile to begin with; be approachable; put your coat on and get stuck in.	Pray and do all you can to help where needed in the small ways. Never allow yourselves to be stressed.	Be available. Pray and thank God for the mass. Don't be afraid to speak out.
Training for the laity to take a more active part in specific areas; of the Church and its community.	Planning and communication.	Hold some discussion groups.	Try to talk to people and involve them more in the charitable works of the parish.	By contacting other parishes in the diocese.
Commitment; sharing; prayer; communication; stand up and be counted; trust the Holy Spirit.	Self; lack of trust; lack of love; modern society; geography of local area; history of the parish.	Establish groups in other parishes.	Find missing families; produce parish website.	Publish, communicate; meet again; PRAY
That all laity would become involved in their various capacities. Particular attention to be given to involving young people as our future hope e.g. in spiritual activities as SVP soup run, Youth to Lourdes.	Non co-operation between groups and between laity and clergy. Difficulties of getting youth interested in parish life. General apathy in parish as a whole; poor attendance at any service or function, other than Sunday Mass, even a large percentage go to Saturday evening instead of Sunday attendance.	By listening to others and to accept what help is on offer. Invite specialist speakers.	To revitalise the Parish Advisory Council, particularly by inviting young people to become involved and invite speakers.	By attending days such as this, and by working together in our parishes. By training groups in various areas e.g. Our Lady's catechists.
Call for at least two people in each parish to become involved with: Youth work – esp. Lourdes Pilgrimage; Marriage and family care, Rainbows send for training; Liturgy, music aim for the holiest the best; catechetics, encourage catechists to do the diploma; be politically aware, lobby MPs etc	Lack of awareness of expertise and organisations, work going on in other areas, diocese. Lack of awareness of the vital part that the laity have to play in the Church today. Communication must be better.	Use internet for info for young people; Contacts: we need to listen to people and share with people. Finance committee could be asked to help with training for counselling, catechetics and pilgrimages etc. be bold, keep asking.	Ask parish priests to announce and explain meeting, prepare handout for distribution after Mass; date place time and brief description of laity involvement. Aim: formation of groups for different work	Bringing expertise from other dioceses. Formation of better-informed groups to pass on expertise to younger ones. 'every organisation started with one or two'. There is a great need for counselling in every parish.

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Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit and your natural gifts and talents to co-operate with the clergy to reach out to those in need around you.	Lack of time – due to demands of modern life and work restrictions and family commitments for laity. More co-operation between religious and laity required in some parishes.	Recommend the groups to others who may be in need, interested or help the groups.	Prayer within my prayer group that we will reach out more in the future and encourage new members to all the groups spoken about today.	By putting into practice what we have spoken about today and to share with fellow parishioners and others what we have heard today.
To love your fellow man.	Lack of interest in others	With love and charity.	Support any of the organisations who have spoken today with full backing from diocese and its priests.	That time and space is given at the pulpit and parish newsletters.
This must contain very strong elements of mission responsibility, collaboration, commitment and charity.	Apathy, selfishness and lack of awareness.	I have been very impressed and moved by some of what I have heard. I have begun to realise that effort is needed and accomplish things and overcome barriers.	I will try to be more active in my own parish and community and not make excuses for opting out.	By meetings such as this.
Lay people using their talents for the service of God, the church and community in search for holiness.	Prejudice of individuals. Intolerance and I don't mean any particular group; lack of knowledge, including that of the teaching of the church i.e. lack of formation.			
The laity are the Church and it will have to do more work in ministry due to the shortage of clergy otherwise the Church will die.	The conservative views of the Church i.e. The Latin Mass Society. Most of the older bishops and clergy.	Asking for their help through prayers and action.	By talking to the parishes.	By action i.e. Legion of Mary, prayer groups, SVP, UCM, Union, and Catholic Men's Society.
Need for action	Co-operation sometimes misunderstood and not always welcomed (especially by older parishioners and clergy); distance between parishes.	Diocesan catechetical team are in the process of developing a programme for training catechetics.	As above – but more needs to be done in providing training and formation.	Regular progress reports – via Menevia News and elsewhere.
Valuing the contribution which lay people have to make to the work of the Church.	Clergy with power complexes or simply unable to let go; lay peoples lack of confidence in themselves in context of the Church; leaving everything to the same 'willing horses'.		To involve; to talk to each other and to listen properly.	By laity taking responsibility for our Church and not just leaving it to Father.
I have heard so many good people today that I find it impossible to make main points.	Hostility to the Church.	I believe I have learned a great deal from the talks.	Cultivate a more perfect knowledge of the scriptures.	I hope that I have a greater appreciation of the Church.
Education/formation in faith / prayer e.g. basic small groups at parish level. Adult education at	Apathy – lack of commitment; no sense of belonging to a community or parish.	Ask for help – liturgy groups; ask for a living liturgy in parish; talk to parish priest	Prayer – lead prayer group	Specific group meeting e.g. young mothers, faith/ prayer formation – retreat – evening days.

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diocesan level.				
Is now the time to have one umbrella group with a voice from every group. It is quite surprising to be made aware of what each group does.	Lack of interest, communication and reluctance to accept change.	Simply by acknowledging the work of others and making others aware of one's own particular society.		Insist on support from your own groups and please ensure you report back to AR.
Listening and seeing a specific need and responding to it.	A small parish where people live quite a long way from the church and an ageing community.	The group which encourages musicians.	Encouraging the musical support in our parish.	Prayer and an awareness of problems with isolated country parishes.
To realise your potential, however small or large.	Faith in one's self. More prayer needed.	Forgetting about cleaning and cooking – Go for it!	To be more positive and to think of others.	Think small and then expand.
More involvement at parish level.	The age-old fact that it is always someone else who does whatever is needed.	Anything that can help young people into active participation.	Keep going on at people to join together.	Try to get people from groups to come and talk to us.
Many societies are very active, and looking to the future with hope.	Lack of encouragement by many of the clergy who do not appreciate the help that the laity can give.	WE now know that we are not alone and support is there.	Publicise and tell others.	Report in Menevia News. Publicity by Bishop and priests in all parishes. Spread the news! The laity is eager to help.
Enthusiasm for evangelisation by communication either verbally, in parish group, or on an individual basis. Education by priests and clergy to accept laity participation – critical for community when priests leave.	Lack of confidence by laity; non-acceptance of priests of laity's ability and capability; distance.	More communication between groups as some areas of work overlap – this causes duplication; branch out to other areas for Marriage Care.	Increase area of marriage support; develop programmes for post-communion and pre-confirmation – children in non-catholic schools.	Diocesan days like today; communicate with groups in other areas; have dialogue with each other.
Being disciples of Christ; Holiness of life; Formation; evangelical life; Church/Group – training (specialist groups. Being familiar with Jesus of the gospels and applying his experiences to our own and following the direction. BIBLE BASE EDUCATION. Awareness (seeing) Evaluation (judging); Participation (acting).	Worry; cares of world – poor relationships – loneliness; anything which provokes introspection. Lack of confidence and encouragement.	CMS; SVP; UCM and CWL. Communication between groups – group discussion over common problems. ECUMENICAL DIALOGUE. Joint worship. Opening our own groups to other denominations.	Revival SVP? Check up on CMS work.	More prayer - enthusiasm – joining in. Communication.
Rainbows, Lourdes Youth helpers.	Awareness of need – communication, time, listening skills.	Discussion; help in finding	Find out more about the needs and resourcefulness.	Watch web sites; be open and aware of what is going on.

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JWs presentation on role of laity was thought provoking. The presentation by CMS was inspiring with a clear call for action. Subsequent presentations excellent in as much as they presented sterling work by dedicated people but did not see to connect too well with 'participation of the laity' as I understand it.				
Encourage people to participate; young and old alike; different groups working together to develop the Church. Development of our faith outside the Church.	Getting people involved; communication is a problem. Lack of it. Do something don't leave for others.	By working together as a team; communicate.	Discussion with our parish priest.	By working together to encourage people to do things.
Shared responsibility/ formation of laity 'we are the Church'	Not delegating the tasks; not asking for help.	Good planning; accept the experience of others.		
The need for real collaborative ministry to encourage an active, evangelising laity, rather than a passive 'speculating' laity. This may initially involve some creative conflict to achieve a result. A parish based promotion of the study of Christifideles Laici resulting in the laity fulfilling its mission by full participation in all parts of parish life (including liturgy); developing awareness of the social teachings of the church to enable it to evangelise the secular world.	The main barrier is clerical resistance (whether this is insecurity or power protection – canon law is often quoted. I have lived in several parishes and never experienced a parish council or seen one in a neighbouring parish. What leadership are the Bishops giving in this matter?			Make use of the diocesan website to establish newsgroups for lay organisations to post news and exchange information. Networking on days like this to discuss common issues.
Getting expert people to talk to us at parish level. Trying to get clergy who are shall we say traditional to work with us as equals.	Lack of readers with sufficient information.	Meeting every so often of all those groups together at parish level.	Bring up these things heard today in organisation to which I belong.	Feedback from parish level to 'Swansea' on a regular basis.
Formation is urgently needed in order to ensure a common vision and shared objectives. A priority is the willing and active promotion of this formation by parish priests.	Lack of self-confidence, uncertainty about ability, fear of offered help being rejected. Over-stretched clergy. Too few trained lay educators.	There are too many groups. They tend to weaken focus on the parish.	The promotion of deanery meetings for catechetics and formation.	By such meetings /education; RCIA; Journey in Faith;

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All parishioners need to accept involvement in life of Church not only those in specific groups. Too many Catholics are only Sunday Catholics.	Apathy, indifference not realising that everyone is important and vital to a catholic community, also attitude of priest.	Too much emphasis on groups. We need to enlist the ordinary parishioners especially those with families. Importance of future must be emphasised.	To try to gather together interested younger parishioners in work of Church.	More items in Menevia News with addresses and telephone numbers for all support groups.
That each parish should be encouraged to study Christifideles Laici with their priests in preparation for moving forward.	Fractured links – between Laity and Priests. This causes misunderstanding of aims from either laity or priests leading to priests digging in to protect status quo; laity frustrated ‘bolshie’ or demoralised.	If all groups of laity work together surely the priests should be encouraged and learn to trust us? Please?	Encourage suggestion 1 i.e. study of Christifideles Laici with priest. Introduce the Rainbows programme or rather awareness of. Feed back information on various groups - many organisations are nothing but names.	I’m now aware of a fantastic network of action much of which has not reached beyond the centres – the out reaches of the diocese are not too well informed. How about a page or two in the Ordo? For each group to explain briefly what they are about. I know all are included but merely as statistics.
Support and communicating with the needs of other people. Practical; listening. More education be given to keeping the liturgy alive. Tapping the gifted in the parish.	Time – or management of time.			Don’t become despondent because of small numbers.
Involvement in Church and society.	Our apathy; secular apathy.		In honesty nothing. Feeling relationship is one way. I put in but Church doesn’t seem to hear what we need or want. Feeling tired and now offering skills to help others.	Conversation with friends and family in other parts of responsibility. More diocesan days. Possibly different themes.
That our prime focus should be our shared faith and love of God and Church; that out of this shared faith and love we should live as a living Church, reaching out to and attracting those around us.	That we are not good at talking about our faith. The wonder of our Synod was that we did talk about our faith – but on return to our parishes we did not know how to continue.	I don’t know. It is inspiring to hear of what others are doing but even if we all were members of good organisations, we would not necessarily be an alive evangelising part of the body of Christ.	Rainbows would be very useful in my large rural parish but with very few Catholics. Maybe this way we could both be a sharing community and reach out to the needy around us.	More faith sharing in our parishes and between our parishes.
More action needed in most of various causes presented today.	Lack of commitment of individual members of societies and groups.	Share responsibility of any particular group with other groups rather than keep feelings about your own group to yourself.	Visit lonely and elderly or sick more often	I will join one or two organisations.
Open doors via newsletters not just on Church notice boards. There is no such thing as bad publicity. Give people the chance, for too long the Church has looked inward. As you said old people talk of the things they done. Let the others tell what they can do. Don’t invite ask!	Established groups don’t like change; people need to be made welcome.	Through their secretaries local chairwomen/ men could arrange integrated meetings. The Church is one; help could be given to each other.	Find out more about organisations, so that they ca be discussed locally so understanding instead of discussing Mrs so and so’s last operation; invite someone to discuss their organisation.	This way the good works of ordinary people through our lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit will travel word of mouth farther afield.

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An inclusive approach. A reaching out to the wider community. Let us bring down the barriers.	Lack of training within the parish and a lack of will.	In our parish all groups work together when possible.		This must come from the top. The bishop and clergy must show the will to change and include lay people.
Have a similar parish day.	Time.	Use the links; attend the Llanelli Youth SVP. Link with Lourdes	Youth SVP	Get cracking – action!
Show your importance in society and diocese. Your dream is your vision of tomorrow.	Let go of old fashionedness.	Support we are all members of the Church and we do find we are interrelated in what we feel and the help we are involved in.	Take more protest action and check that our parish know these groups.	By word of mouth and by deeds and actions.
Encourage priests to welcome participation – co-operation from parishioners, continuity when priests move on; priests differ, music, liturgy – courses to help build up groups for these.	Commitment, laity feels inadequate and confidence. Priests are often unsure of their role; police checks.	Meeting at regular intervals; co-operating with these groups.	Appealing to other parishioners to join a group in our parish.	Having a parish meeting with priest to make parishioners aware of their responsibilities and the gifts they have which can be used for the good of the parish.
The groups were very interesting but we can read about the in the Year Book – what we want are guidelines – what to do?	The resources are here amongst the laity in the wings. The clergy, you need help – we don't want to take over (honest)	Parish visitations from the groups.	Very difficult – some are happy just to go to Mass on Sunday, but we must all spread the good news.	Exchange ideas with other parishes - expand the ministry.
Emphasis on the responsibility of every Catholic to become more involved in the life of the parish and diocese.	The pressure of the society in which we live; much of the work in parishes seems to be done by very few people. The challenge is to involve more people.	Some of the groups described today were unknown to me and I'm sure I'm not alone in this. In an age where we are constantly swamped with information, the groups need to be able to communicate their work with emphasis on practical ways.	Talk to as many people as possible about things I've done today. Pray.	Tell, tell and tell again.
Fostering community – parish family support; enabling the parish priest to carry out his pastoral role.	Prejudice – fear of change, fear of relinquishing responsibility; fear of taking control and responsibility; apathy.	Advertise proactively the groups in being.	Advertise on parish website; contact points for different organisations.	Positive action notices.