

Summary of Synodal Surveys and Meetings 2021 – St Simon Stock Parish, Walderslade

61 adults returned their survey forms.

Parishioners were asked to put their age on the survey so we could see if we had addressed all age groups. Many did not put their age on but, of those who did, the majority were in the 60+ age range.

<i>What are the ways in which our parish most successfully brings people together?</i>	
Comments with Positive Information	Comments suggesting further work needed
<p>Social activities/events/evenings: 42%</p> <p>Rosary/prayers: 36%</p> <p>Liturgy/Mass/Sacraments: 34%</p> <p>8 Hr weekly Adoration/24 hr Adoration: 21%</p> <p>Summer Fete: 18%</p> <p>Charitable: 16%</p> <p>Christmas Bazaar: 15%</p> <p>UCM: 11%</p> <p>10%: After Mass get together (after 6 pm Mass Sat & 11 pm Mass Sunday). <i>Mass & Celebrations for St Simon Stock Feast Day/Anniversaries.</i> Various quizzes.</p> <p>Regular support for Foodbank: 8%</p> <p>7%: Remembering parishioners' birthdays. <i>Wonderful community feel at Mass.</i> <i>Spiritual.</i></p> <p>5%: Daily/Extra Mass. <i>Preparation for Baptism, First Reconciliation, first Holy Communion & Confirmation.</i> Charismatic Prayer and Praise. <i>Zoom meetings and prayer.</i> School celebrations/festivals. <i>WhatsApp groups.</i></p> <p>3%: Advent reflections. <i>Lent reflections.</i></p>	<p>2%: What is meant by success? Over 1.3 billion Catholics in the world; only small percentage are practising Catholics. In excess of 900 baptised Catholics in Walderslade Parish. Pre-pandemic, Mass attendance was 300 per week, with less than 60 people at other religious services, apart from Holy Week. Is 360 people successful?</p> <p><i>Successive reduction of people receiving Holy Communion at a young age who then go on to receive the sacrament of Confirmation and become adult practising Catholics.</i></p> <p>Attendance levels at Reconciliation.</p> <p><i>Need to reflect on parable of Lost Sheep as we are losing more than 1 per 100.</i></p> <p>Community feel not as good as before pandemic because of current problems facing people eg rising prices, inability to access medical services etc. Need to persevere to attain at least pre covid standards.</p> <p><i>Not very good at outside causes except Foodbank because all our fundraising goes to support our own building.</i></p> <p>Could we take on and support a mission as a parish?</p> <p><i>Endeavour to make fundamental changes in the Church to address global concerns about several issues affecting all People of God, including the Clergy and other religious organisations and institutions around the world.</i></p> <p>Covid cut off everything we did together, spiritually and socially.</p>

Summary of Synodal Surveys and Meetings 2021 – St Simon Stock Parish, Walderslade

<p>RCIA. <i>Prayer/prayer groups.</i> Children's Liturgy on Sundays/Feast days. <i>Adult choir.</i> Children's choir. <i>Bereavement Group.</i> Welcoming and friendly parish, growing in size and mission. <i>Parish website.</i> Liturgical, spiritual and social meetings are run by a small dedicated group of people who report back to the parish. <i>Basic parish groups eg safeguarding, maintenance etc.</i> Liaising with other denominations via Chatham Deanery. <i>Barbeques.</i> Fundraisers.</p> <p>2%: Yearly Mass for the sick and housebound. <i>Easter/Holy Week.</i> Mass in Polish every month. <i>Welcome groups.</i> Reconciliation. <i>Advent Carol Service.</i> Christmas Carol Service. KSC. SVP. <i>Parish newsletter.</i> Strong liturgical team which meets regularly to ensure our faith is reflected in all we do. They work co-operatively to ensure all are included in liturgical celebrations. <i>Meetings.</i> Sharing with other parishes. <i>Liaising with charities and social organisations via Chatham Deanery.</i> Sponsored walk. <i>Cake baking sale every month.</i> Before covid this was a very sociable parish. Spiritual bible discussions. <i>Blessed to be part of the parish.</i> Holy Communion to the sick & updating them on news. <i>Retreats/Mission open to all.</i> Interfaith action. <i>Parish Priest and Deacon lead us in building up our Church community.</i> Trips out.</p>	<p><i>How can we ensure those without internet access or mobile phones have access to spiritual and practical support in such situations?</i></p> <p>Think the parish should be more friendly</p>
--	---

Summary of Synodal Surveys and Meetings 2021 – St Simon Stock Parish, Walderslade

<p><i>Dinners/lunches.</i> Film shows. <i>Stations of the Cross.</i> Second collections which support various needs within and without the church. <i>Clergy Support Fund – we raised beyond our target.</i> Planned Giving Drive increased collections and identified skilled and talents of members of the congregation. <i>A great volume of volunteers.</i> Readers at Mass. <i>Supporting others spiritually during the pandemic.</i> Workshop/craft sessions to raise funds.</p>	
<p><i>Jesus is present as the head united with us as His body in our parish and community. How is this reflected in our parish/community life? Are there other reasons we gather together?</i></p>	
<p>Comments with Positive Information</p>	<p>Comments suggesting further work needed</p>
<p>Mass: 16%</p> <p>Social events: 10%</p> <p>7%: We get together because of our faith and belief. Good sense of community. <i>WhatsApp groups.</i></p> <p>5%: Very spiritual, welcoming, humble priests and the Pope who lead and direct us on our faith journey. <i>Sharing our faith through discussion, books etc.</i> Prayer and Praise. <i>The priest represents Christ in the administration of the sacraments.</i> Parish meetings, including prayer to begin and end meetings eg pastoral, liturgical and catechetical. <i>Education in the two schools and our sacramental programmes.</i> All answering the call to serve/stewardship (pre and post pandemic). <i>We need to be together to recognise our needs eg Bereavement Group.</i></p>	<p><i>We don't gather enough anymore because of covid: 5%</i></p> <p>2%: How do we address the issue of lack of religious instruction for children after primary school?</p> <p><i>How does the parish follow the directive of 'Go out and teach'?</i></p> <p>We are not encountering enough time to be able to listen and discern the important issues of the time.</p> <p><i>Are our sacramental programmes supportive enough, particularly to support families to keep up their practise of faith?</i></p> <p>Could we access groups in other parishes for our youth?</p> <p><i>Lack of young people in our church. 50+ for Holy Communion and only 3 or 4 for Confirmation (2022 = 12). 1 countrywide problem for parishes.</i></p> <p>We don't have provision for young people</p>

Summary of Synodal Surveys and Meetings 2021 – St Simon Stock Parish, Walderslade

<p>3%: We are there for each other, helping to spread love and support each other. <i>Weekly time at Adoration taking the opportunity to give time to the Lord in an atmosphere of prayer.</i> Children’s participation in Christmas Mass inside and outside. <i>Weekly rosary on Zoom.</i> Lenten and Advent reflections. <i>Encouragement to pray for various people and needs, recognising the power of prayer should never be underestimated.</i> Meetings after Mass.</p> <p>2%: Jesus is definitely central in this parish. <i>Our priest’s homilies reflect on present day topics.</i> This is reflected in the joy everyone has in coming together; everyone takes time to smile and greet each other. <i>He is present. The Adoration group is lovely with extended time for working parents in the evening.</i> Close contact with all committed Adorers and possible volunteers. <i>An annual, 24 hr Before the Lord with parishioners volunteering to lead in prayer/praise.</i> Children’s Liturgy. <i>Other services such as weddings, funerals etc.</i> Preparation for First Reconciliation & First Holy Communion (usually with parents in attendance). <i>Confirmation programme for young adults.</i> Working together to improve Church buildings and raise funds for these developments. <i>Religious icons to support prayer.</i> Scout group. <i>We gain comfort from worshipping as a group.</i></p>	<p>(teenagers).</p> <p><i>We need to realise our interconnectedness with the world and act on it.</i></p> <p>Schools to be more involved in faith issues for our young people.</p> <p><i>Does everyone know about the WhatsApp groups?</i></p>
<p><i>Reflecting on the 16 months of the pandemic, how has participation in our parish been affected? Were those issues there before the pandemic?</i></p>	
<p>Comments with Positive Information</p>	<p>Comments suggesting further work needed</p>
<p>Our prayer life grew through WhatsApp, Zoom and participating in Mass via YouTube etc: 20%</p>	<p>Many members of the parish have not returned for a variety of reasons, such as health issues, anxiety or simple apathy: 26%</p>

Summary of Synodal Surveys and Meetings 2021 – St Simon Stock Parish, Walderslade

<p>Sterling work by dedicated teams, many of them young people, who organised participation at Mass, safely and caringly: 13%</p> <p>Fr Bart was able to communicate spiritually and socially via technology to connect us as a parish family: 11%</p> <p>No issues pre-pandemic: 8%</p> <p>Livestreaming has meant those who are usually unable to attend Mass have been able to participate virtually: 7%</p> <p>Sunday Masses outdoors with Communion: 5%</p> <p>3%: Numbers are gradually increasing at Sunday Masses. <i>Website has had good links to CAFOD website materials.</i></p> <p>2% Parish always helpful. <i>Parish allowed for families/individuals to reach out if they were mentally affected during the pandemic.</i> Likes that when Masses have been paid for, the people are mentioned 3 times throughout the Mass. <i>Pandemic brought different groups together in a virtual way. People who would not normally have met.</i> Our choir recorded music which was blended together to be played at Mass. <i>We adapted to a new normal.</i> New groups of volunteers were brought together to keep our parishioners safe. <i>Our congregation is steadily rising.</i> Had to rely on modern technology to keep us connected with the Church which led to an improvement of skills which were shared. <i>Our parish has gained monetarily due to the generosity of many parishioners.</i> We hope/pray for increased numbers at Mass. <i>Numbers have increased due to programmes for First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion which necessitates parents and children attendance at Mass.</i> Pandemic showed some people how much they</p>	<p><i>People have left the church as they have lost the habit of attending/ found they didn't need Mass/Churches: 10%</i></p> <p>5%: Many people left behind because of their lack of technology, had to rely on phone calls or home visits. <i>Need to have a livestreamed Mass on a Sunday so sick and housebound could still access Mass. Social events/meetings unable to happen. Wearing masks in church makes conversation difficult.</i></p> <p>3%: Parish may have lost funds. <i>Not able to contact everyone if they needed help. We need a system so that everyone is contactable in such a crisis.</i> We must not return to 'business as usual' but need to find ways to show everyone that our Church is alive and filled with the Holy Spirit. <i>9 am Mass at St Benedict's now moved to the Church. Some parents who attended at the school feel it is a loss.</i> More physical divisions. <i>Doesn't always feel friendly.</i> Pandemic was a major issue. <i>Children less involved in live Masses due to covid restrictions.</i> Pre-covid activities not always good. <i>During pandemic there was a change of priest which would affect a parish at any time.</i></p> <p>2%: We need to find ways to give people the confidence to return. <i>People who used to do lots had to step back because of having to isolate.</i> It has always been a struggle to get people to be involved in parish life, even more so post lockdown. <i>Not so many people could attend Mass. Sick and housebound were unable to receive Communion during pandemic. Everyone needs to know what is on offer in the parish. Not everyone can access the website.</i></p> <p>Numbers will drop after the Reconciliation and Holy Communion programmes finish.</p>
---	---

Summary of Synodal Surveys and Meetings 2021 – St Simon Stock Parish, Walderslade

<p>do need the church. <i>Some people attending weekday Masses where there is a smaller congregation.</i> Able parishioners shopped for those in lockdown. <i>A fund set up to help finance anyone in need.</i></p>	<p><i>Participation in programmes was quite bad even before the pandemic with only the ‘usual’ parishioners attending.</i> Is the children’s liturgy still running? <i>Baptism course is still suspended but Baptism preparation can be performed by priest or deacon.</i> Restricted access to Mass, worship and Sacraments. <i>Lack of involvement of teenagers after Confirmation. How can we address this?</i></p>
<p><i>How can we encourage and support everyone to be fully involved and responsible in the life of the Church at the parish/diocesan level?</i></p>	
<p>Comments with Positive Information</p>	<p>Comments suggesting further work needed</p>
<p>5%: We do encourage and support people to be involved in our parish and give purpose to their lives. <i>Parish WhatsApp groups have helped all still to be involved and supported. Initial group set up by a parishioner.</i> Information in newsletter.</p> <p>3%: Events like the induction of our new Parish Priest was a magical outdoor social time for most of us and reflected how we work together. <i>Parish website.</i> Back at Church, we were able to socialise and hear about the needs of others. <i>School supports Catholic prayer.</i> Good system for welcoming people.</p> <p>2%: This was happening pre-covid. We are ready for a big push to all get fully involved. <i>Participation in prayer groups.</i> Going to Church regularly. <i>Regular meetings.</i> We do very well at parish level. <i>Retired members of the parish with more time, will always bear the brunt of the time needed to run the parish, and that is actually good and</i></p>	<p>8%: More child/family friendly approach needed. <i>More diverse programmes to meet parish diversity and ensure all are reached.</i></p> <p>3%: A system to contact all known Catholic parishioners to educate and inform them about the Catholic religion, in the hope they would see their faith as not just a weekend event. <i>Identify skills in the parish and share them to benefit all/groups.</i> Improved communication so everyone knows what’s on offer in the parish. <i>Lack of technology by some parishioners led them to feel isolated from what was on offer.</i> Organise and plan social and charitable events. <i>More welcoming and engagement in community.</i> Encourage children to attend Church services. Invite more people to social events.</p> <p>2%: To quote Pope Francis in his homily at the opening of the Synod: ‘Are we prepared for the adventure of this journey or are we fearful of the unknown, preferring to take refuge in the usual excuses of, it’s useless or we always do it this way’. <i>Find out what is most needed from parishioners.</i></p>

Summary of Synodal Surveys and Meetings 2021 – St Simon Stock Parish, Walderslade

<p><i>right.</i> We do thank people who volunteer and that, in turn, leads to other people coming forward to volunteer. <i>Younger people stepped up as volunteers.</i> Church development fund. <i>We have a support fund to help people.</i> We have Foodbank collections. <i>We have Christmas tree presents for children.</i> Being completely open about what is happening in our parish. <i>Social media.</i> Personal invitation. <i>Ensuring sick and housebound have regular visiting from parish to make them feel included.</i> After Mass – tea/coffee time which enables conversations, when safe to do so.</p>	<p>Adult Catechesis– helping to make the faith new so the involvement comes from within, rather than a responsibility. <i>Re-engagement and contact with those who feel detached from the parish.</i> Sharing our concerns with others in this area of other faiths under one God, revealed to us by Jesus. <i>Listen more to others.</i> Catholic Education in schools to invite speakers to talk about what their faith means to them. <i>Things at diocesan level are held too far away and incur expenses.</i> Not everyone is supported by Church eg deliberately ostracised – divorced, remarried people, gay people. They are denied the most essential part of being a Catholic – the Blessed Sacrament. <i>Communication.</i> Some people don't volunteer and need a personal invitation to be involved, some others use the Church just for their own spiritual needs. <i>Need a simple system of contact for everyone, irrespective of their technology.</i> Very difficult with the pressures of everyday life, for young families and working people to be more involved in parish life. <i>Concern that nothing was mentioned from the Church about the murder of the MP David Ames, who was a Catholic.</i> More openness about the different planning groups of the parish.</p>
<p><i>Are we looking in, or are we looking out, as a parish community?</i></p>	
<p>Comments with Positive Information</p>	<p>Comments suggesting further work needed</p>
<p>Both eg Foodbank, Holy Communion to the sick: 30%</p> <p>Mainly looking in: 28%</p> <p>More in than out: 8%</p> <p>We look out to spread the word: 7%</p> <p>3%: Progress still being made.</p>	<p>Greater ties with our neighbouring Christian Churches could be forged: 7%</p> <p><i>We need to continue to look in until we are stronger and more able to spread out more to other parish communities: 3%</i></p> <p>2%:</p> <p>Maybe we need to look at better ways to communicate our mission statement.</p>

Summary of Synodal Surveys and Meetings 2021 – St Simon Stock Parish, Walderslade

<p><i>Our duty is to look out as a parish.</i></p> <p>2%: We look in to the Bible for our teaching. <i>In, to Christ, and then out to the community.</i> Out looking. Previously engaging with Walderslade group of churches. <i>Parishioners take part in Adoration of Blessed Sacrament.</i> Red mission boxes & Catholic Education. <i>Looking out at the rest of the world and recognising all as part of one big family, with an awareness of those less fortunate than us.</i> We need to look in to examine ourselves and our actions and then to start looking out, reaching out a friendly hand to other communities. <i>Meetings relating to Liturgy and sacramental preparation.</i> Liaise with other parishes. <i>Worked with Diocese on setting up weekly Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.</i> Active Bereavement group. <i>UCM working to support the parish and other charities.</i> Volunteer co-ordinating donations to the Foodbank. <i>Financial support for projects worldwide.</i> Support many different organisations, particularly CAFOD. <i>In the past, we have given a lot of support to Third World countries via Tradecraft sales.</i> We have a parishioner on an active justice and Peace group. <i>Glad to be Grey group is an ecumenical group for older members of all the local churches.</i> <i>They organise social and spiritual events every year.</i> Always welcome new people and try to be inclusive.</p>	<p><i>It is difficult for some people to rebuild or build new relationships, having been isolated for so long.</i> Parishioners need to understand, quite simply, what evangelisation involves. <i>Need a way to evaluate who is reaching out and how much.</i> Follow up new parishioner forms in order to offer support and encourage them in participation in the life of the community, instead of just being consumers. <i>Further information about group leaders etc so parishioners would have a point of contact.</i> Funds we have available to assist others outside of the parish, restricted by large amounts parish has to pay to the Diocese. <i>Need more people to step forward for groups such as Justice and Peace.</i> More involvement with parish schools. <i>More groups for young people.</i> Contact with lapsed Catholics.</p>
---	---

Does the life of the parish through catechesis, adult formation and liturgy help parishioners to

Summary of Synodal Surveys and Meetings 2021 – St Simon Stock Parish, Walderslade

<i>recognise their role as Christ's missionary disciples?</i>	
Comments with Positive Information	Comments suggesting further work needed
<p>Yes: 30%</p> <p>5%: Yes, because the parish is involved in all of the above. <i>We have active FHC, Confirmation, Baptism & RCIA Catechists plus children's liturgy.</i></p> <p>3%: Before covid we involved the parents in our preparation for First Reconciliation and Holy Communion and often had parents then joining the RCIA programme as a consequence, and then entering the Church. <i>Catechists are enthusiastic and reliable, recognising their role as Christ's missionaries.</i></p> <p>2%: In a limited way, by a limited few. <i>Yes, through prayer.</i> Yes, they are very supportive in their duties. <i>Yes. Teams of people who work tirelessly in many different ways, building up the life of the parish.</i> Yes, being involved in catechesis is a great privilege as it enables the catechist to grow in understanding and faith, whilst walking with others who are under instruction in the faith. <i>Eucharistic Adoration gives us the time to pray for the wisdom of the Holy Spirit to help us with this.</i> The Baptism course involved parents and catechists meeting together. <i>Strong response to supporting the Foodbank & this initiative led by one individual.</i> I think this parish is trying to help parishioners. <i>Personally, greatly blessed with the programmes as well as the traditional Mass.</i> First Saturday & Divine Mercy programmes help with this, encouraging spiritual growth. <i>We encourage children to get involved in Sunday Masses.</i> Parish clergy and liturgy team work hard for the promotion of the liturgy and acts of public worship. They work alongside the choir to use music so that we can praise and thank God</p>	<p>5%: More could be done. <i>Not something they would be aware of.</i></p> <p>3%: Quite a large number of people who are not willing to commit to any more than attending Sunday Mass. <i>More Gospel reflections or evenings as they were always well-received and helped to bring our faithful community together in Christ.</i></p> <p>2%: What happens when the limited few go on sabbatical? <i>No awareness/confidence to pass on their faith.</i> Generally, I do not think we are recognising our missionary roles or being supported to do so. <i>Covid led to a reduced number of catechists. RCIA not yet started.</i> <i>Lack of provision for young people between Holy Communion and Confirmation with the result that we lose the vast majority, so we need to do something urgently.</i> Need to change the perception of the Church by young people, by finding ways to show them the joys and charism of the Holy Spirit. <i>Something has gone out of the liturgy. Would like to hear the Hail Mary after each bidding prayer.</i> Unsure what Adult Formation means. <i>When we have followed the Church rules all of our lives, these very necessary teachings do not apply to us.</i> Our role as missionary disciples does not always feel as joyful as it deserves to be.</p>

Summary of Synodal Surveys and Meetings 2021 – St Simon Stock Parish, Walderslade

<p>together. <i>First Reconciliation/Holy Communion currently ongoing, but under covid rules.</i> Baptism, during covid is being covered by our Deacon. <i>Confirmation classes about to start.</i> One member for RCIA last year whose training was supplemented by Diocesan Zoom. <i>Children attend Masses and sometimes are given gifts like rosaries, small Mass books etc.</i> Children making their first Reconciliation and Holy Communion hand in and collect their books at Masses. <i>Our liturgy ensures all share the joy of Christ, irrespective of their age or culture. We work for full inclusion of our diverse parish members.</i> We are encouraged to improve our own prayer life. <i>WhatsApp helps us to be more connected with God.</i> The homily does, also newsletters and bidding prayers. <i>Adult Formation and liturgy help parishioners to recognise their role as Christ's missionary disciples.</i></p>	
--	--

Results of Children's Survey (32 children returned the survey):

In reply to the question: We like to think of our Parish as being one big family. What are the ways members of our parish family are brought together? We had the following responses:
25% gave at Church. **22%** gave Mass. **6%** gave Church events; School; Liturgy; regular update and activities; after Church when we can chat; prayers; love; seeing people at events; care for each other; prayer meetings; lessons for making the Sacraments. **3%** of the children gave the following answers: joining in Mass.

In reply to the question: Jesus is the head of our parish family. How can we know that from what's happening in our parish? What other times do we manage to get together as a parish family? We had the following responses:

25% gave Christmas. **19%** gave Easter. **9%** gave Mass. **6%** of the children gave the following answers: church wedding: morning prayers; watching Gospel programmes; praying; tea and cakes, coffee and biscuits; at school; when we say the Sign of the Cross; notices at the end of Mass; website; in Church; Harvest; people can go to Church on Wednesdays and say 'Hello' to Jesus.

In reply to the question: The pandemic lasted 16 months. How did that affect our parish life? We had the following responses:

13% gave Church was shut; we couldn't see others. **9%** gave it reduced us being in Church. **6%** of the children gave the following answers: we couldn't meet; no Mass; very much; spent less time appreciating God for his protection and love; Church doesn't feel the same; we didn't get the

Summary of Synodal Surveys and Meetings 2021 – St Simon Stock Parish, Walderslade

chance to talk; we felt sad; we couldn't go to Church; we weren't able to attend the parish; no children's liturgy; didn't get tea and biscuits in the hall after Mass.

In reply to the question: What can we do to be more involved in parish life?

We had the following responses:

9% gave activities to bring everyone together. **6%** gave school events; talk; communicate; do clubs; improve communication; more events around the Church; have coffee mornings; host more school Masses; ask them to pray more; make Masses more frequent. **3%** of the children gave the following answer: activities.

In reply to the question: Jesus asked all of us to be kind and loving like He is. And to share his message with others. How can we do this?

We had the following responses:

13% gave be nice to friends; tell people about the bible. **6%** of children gave the following answers: help each other; by our actions; in assembly; maybe give away bibles; be kind; by sharing His love; watch short videos at school on YouTube about Jesus and His life; watch short videos at Church on YouTube about Jesus and His life; charity days; tell people about being kind; help people who have got hurt.

In reply to the question: What happens in our parish to share Jesus' message?

We had the following responses:

28% gave Mass. **19%** gave prayer. **6%** not much; school Mass; we have more than just Priest and Deacon reading; we are taught the bible and we can spread that to more people therefore, we are spreading Jesus' message; we all get together and the priest spreads the message from God; we talk to each other and say kind words; we go to Church. **3%** of children gave the following answer: Jesus' message is shared at the Mass.

Other points for consideration brought out in meetings/surveys etc:

Hopes for the Synodal process:

That people will take it seriously and do their part.

That's it's not just a paper exercise.

Great expectations and excitement for some about the process.

Other issues affecting the Church as a whole at the moment (from notes of meetings):

Responsibility of the Church to look again at the issues regarding divorced/remarried people (why can't they take the sacraments?); people who've had abortions; people using contraception...

Rise in domestic violence and abuse, and in the rate of suicide: Could the diocese put on some workshops around these areas?

How do we, as a Church, deal with people's emotional issues and anxiety?

What can we do about people who no longer practice?