



### **Crossing the Threshold National Tour Day Conferences: Ministry and Outreach to Non Churchgoing Catholics**

*Summary of comments received from attendees, as submitted on the evaluation forms. They are typed up as written by the participants.*

#### **Please identify what you have gained through participating in this gathering: Question 1 - 4<sup>th</sup> February 2012**

- Ideas for outreach.
- Acting in a Christian way should be the focus, rather than saying one is a Christian and hopefully the other would be moved to enquire about one's inspiration and motivation.

Question 1 –28<sup>th</sup> April 2012, Westminster,

- An awareness of why people leave the church.
- Made me realise I have to make time for God.

Question 1 – 12<sup>th</sup> November 2011, York

- A reflection on what is happening in our parish and my life, i.e. evangelisation.
- Encouragement
- A sort of clarification about how God's grace is there to welcome and how I could perhaps co-operate with that.
- A deeper understanding of how to address resting Catholics.
- Practical examples from others on to what has worked – Inviting techniques etc.
- Greater understanding of obstacles to participating in Mass and the Sacraments.
- Chance to react like – miracle Catholics.
- Encouragement
- Reflection
- A sense that we, the people of God are concerned about other non churchgoing brothers and sisters.
- Encouragement, hope for the future.
- Listening to people – enhances me as a person.
- Awareness of the difficulties people wanting to reform to church might be experiencing.
- Great examples of good practice.
- Clarifying issues, concerns, obstacles and suggestions on how to overcome these. I.e. the introduction.
- I have learned that a wealth of resources is available to help us in our work.
- Increased awareness of the "Retiring forces."
- New ways of reaching out to those who are at a distance from the Church.
- The importance of functioning, welcoming parishes.
- Some ideas and insights to build off of for evangelising.

- Increased awareness of others views/ideas/issues towards evangelising.
- A chance to reflect on opportunities to evangelise and the great need of evangelisation.
- Reassuring to meet many people who experience same challenges in reaching out to non churchgoers.
- Encouragement – increased hope for “new life” within Church.
- Hope, practical help, glad “Big Church” getting together to help us in our ministry.
- Sharing experiences.
- That I was not alone in that none of my children were practising Catholics.
- Friendship.
- Information about various resources / schemes available.
- Learnt how essential it is to offer outreach to God’s people – but at the same time to realise that it is through Christ and not my action that this can be brought to functions.
- Confidence.
- A clearer understanding of the lay parishioner’s role in assisting returners.
- A desire to be more a part of the Church.
- A greater sense of community
- The great importance of evangelisation.
- Need to get “non judgemental” parishioners involved.
- Ideas and encouragement to speak to somebody in the church that I may not have seen before.
- Ideas of telling people about ‘Spiritual Communion.’
- The call to evangelise where there have been strong roots.
- Sharing ideas.
- The importance of each person being welcomed and accepted.
- New ideas from workshops.
- Refreshed and renewed my awareness of “why I am a Catholic.”
- A firm desire to share my faith and be proud of my faith.
- A bit more encouragement about practicing my new call in leading my R.C.I.A group.
- Not sure yet. Need time to reflect on the day.
- A better understanding of what’s going on elsewhere.
- Some good ideas.
- Seek all opportunities to make contact with and relate to those who have “left” their faith from the Church.
- A realisation on the depth and concern about these issues.
- A chance to look at work in other dioceses.
- Attending the gathering and meeting, so many committed people was most encouraging.
- It was helpful to meet with others.
- Good contacts and useful conversations.
- Meeting other enthusiastic people.
- Highlighting things forgotten – e.g. the importance of story (film)
- Renewed Enthusiasm.
- Personal gain – which my experience of ‘crossing the threshold’ is a shared experience and that no one needs to be alone in their journey.

- Enthusiasm, encouragement from workshops leaders and other participants.
- Clearer understanding of how to reach out to non-church going Catholics.
- Shared experience on a wider level.
- Looking at schemes now available for use within parish community.
- Tactical information and advice.
- A wider experience of Church.
- Meeting new people – friendship.
- My responsibility as a Christian to share faith with others through encouragement and friendship.

## Question 2 – 4<sup>th</sup> February 2012 – taking home?

- Networking with other parishes.
- The church being visible in collaboration with other organisations / groups in social action is also an important witness.

## Question 2 – 28<sup>th</sup> April, Westminster

- An insight into the steps parishes can take in reaching to non-churchgoers. Good info on Alpha and R.C.I.A.
- Went back to my parish with lots of ideas.

## Question 2 – 12<sup>th</sup> November 2011

- Some contacts and resource material which will help me personally in my behaviour and my role within the church community.
- Support
- Best, whether it is involving pilgrimages or witnessing to reconciliation and personal relationship with God.
- To see the Sacrament of Reconciliation in a clearer light.
- A renewed desire to be authentic and to change myself first; and to speak out of my own experience.
- Importance of ALL in the parish being involved.
- Encouragement in apostolate of reaching out to others.
- Recognition of common issues: this is the church.
- A great sense of belonging and friendship.
- Sense of fellowship.
- Knowledge and ideas. How to move forward in confidence and we are in God's hands!
- A desire to reach out and help.
- Insight into how helpless good people can feel.
- That the majority of participating laity are NOT in the first part of youth as is the norm now in church!
- Lots of inset / attendance from parishes.
- An awareness of how many people we have "lost."
- Inspired me to think more deeply about inviting lapsed Catholics back to mass.
- Blessed encounters and talks re, how to evangelise the "English Catholics".
- Learning of: discussing practical ways to evangelise.
- Good to share ideas with others / learn what they are doing in ministry to non-churchgoing Catholics.
- Variety of people – powerful prayerful sharing.
- Getting ideas of how to help, who to help and who to involve and why.
- There were some good ideas to get people to return but there were barriers within the church that prevented it.
- Understanding and friendship.
- Encouragement that the Church is endeavouring to focus on the need for effective evangelisation.
- Ideas for "tempting" people to return.

- It's okay not to like everything.
- A realisation that everyone has a responsibility to support the parish. "We are in this together" as we need to support the church family.
- The very important part I am being asked to pray.
- Realisation that some people present are part of the same age group – middle to old. Few young people here.
- Taking RISKS to evangelise – LISTENING.
- The sharing of experiences, my own and very important listening to others.
- Renewed my awareness of the need to be a better witness, so that I may attract others to return to being an active Christian.
- That it's ok if mistakes have been made, learning from them and hopefully not to repeat them.
- Being a bit more aware of opportunities in befriending lapsed Catholics in day to day life.
- To listen more...
- Some encouragement.
- An appreciation of the wealth of ideas and resources available.
- To feel part of a National Initiative.
- Receiving information of the participating group.
- Opportunities for prayer, listening, learning and sharing.
- Confirmation this is God's work – we do our best.
- Sharing and learning what others do.
- A full heart.
- Ideas about small things we can do to encourage other, plus lots of useful resources to help us.
- The importance of prayer.
- Knowledge of sacrament of reconciliation.
- Ideas to take forward.
- Ideas for reaching out to people – both resting Catholics and those interested in the Catholic faith.
- Resources to evaluate.
- Awareness of people – and church – all so different – many needs to God's work.
- Sharing.
- Let God be God.
- People in the outer world.
- Ideas for outreach.

## **Which parts of the programme / presentations did you find the most useful?**

4<sup>th</sup> February 2012

- Workshops
- Bishop Regan's talk and analysis: structure and content helped me to examine my own prejudices; see different points of view and gain ideas about different approaches; was encouraging.

28<sup>th</sup> April 2012, Westminster

- Bishop Moth's talk raised many useful points / questions.
- Michael Roche's workshop was excellent – very informative.
- Kit's.

12<sup>th</sup> November 2011, York

- The practical sessions and resources.
- All very good and worth listening too, well put together.
- I found the pilgrimages and shrines session really informative / helpful / also the succinct but great homily in the mass. We always need reminding evangelisation is the domain of the Holy Spirit, we are just the tools.
- The sharing of experiences with other diocese and parishes.
- How to signpost people to the sacrament of reconciliation.
- Loved that we had Mass together.
- Small group discussions were very helpful for cultivation new ideas and making concrete our topics.
- AM presentation – presentation on confession ( practical advice)
- Opportunity for the Sacrament of Reconciliation – however – it would have been useful to have it before Mass, e.g. during registration.
- Time spent in groups was useful.
- Small group sharing.
- Opportunities to share experiences.
- ALL, Clare Ward's talk was excellent.
- Discussion groups.
- Reconciliation.
- Pilgrimages and shrines as part of returning process.
- Sharing prayer times and attending mass.
- Sacrament of Reconciliation discussion and the opportunity to participate myself in the sacrament prior to it.
- All very helpful.
- The morning session / presentation.
- Workshops – good to talk / share.
- Introduction to day was very good.
- The workshop on "Reaching Out."
- Fr. Alan inviting all contributions.
- Sr Josefa and her enthusiasm for Holy Island camp and its effects.

- Presentation by Sr. Michael about what they are doing in their diocese as an evangelisation team in the parishes and schools – very inspiring and helpful in our own ministry.
- Thought it was all very well done – couldn't imagine anything different.
- The morning talk and the workshops were useful.
- Opening presentation was clear and concise.
- Enjoyed the two sessions I attended – would have liked to attend the other 2 as well, but relative time doesn't permit 4 in one day!
- Clare Ward's presentation.
- Fr Keogh's input.
- 1<sup>st</sup> talk – good at summarising what it's about. Both sessions – reconciliation – pilgrimage – excellent, well led and full of ideas.
- The introduction to the day was key to understanding why we were here and that “we can make a difference.”
- The small and effective gestures.
- All interesting except the grouping at the end of the morning.
- Clare's introductory session.
- The session and peoples response to the sacrament of reconciliation.
- Morning more helpful than workshop.
- Workshop 3 – brilliant, especially the first part which was so practical and had me planning adaptations for my own parish – the ‘small gestures.’
- The pilgrimage workshop and the reconciliation workshop.
- The example used in session 3 using the experience of Hexham and Newcastle.
- How to signpost people to the sacrament of reconciliation.
- Reaching out to someone who has lapsed or maybe doesn't know God.
- All presented in an easy way.
- Sister Brenda's workshop.
- Clare Ward's workshop.
- Sister Brenda's workshop.
- Workshop 2.
- Talking to people about their experiences and listening to the Sister from Newcastle and Hexham about her ideas for reaching out in our community.
- Morning session.
- Sr. Brenda's workshop.
- Sr. Michael workshop.
- Keynote speech – great!
- Being part of a workshop helped to focus and reflect on our actions.
- How to reach out to someone.
- Workshop 1.
- Clare's talk.
- How to reach out to others.
- Reconciliation – sharing our experiences.
- Workshops 2 and 3.
- Opening session by Clare helped to awaken and re-focus me.
- Session on ‘Reaching Out’ by Sr. Brenda and team did the same.

- I found them all very interesting and hopefully put some of them into practice in the future.
- I loved the introduction session and how we can be witnesses in day to day living without preaching.
- Workshop 4.
- The workshop an opportunity for “networking.”
- Talk good, workshop good.
- Group sharing and the workshops – finding that we all have something to contribute.
- The workshop presentations and discussions and the availability of resources. Liked Clare’s initial presentation too.
- Practical suggestions and guidance on materials to use and to identify opportunities.
- Group discussions.
- Group discussions.
- Morning presentation by Clare – use of power point – good. But all in all has been good / useful.
- Clare Ward’s presentation.
- The presentations were structures and focused.
- The examples given in the talks (experiences).
- The introductory presentation about reasons why people don’t attend church, and the focus on our own role in that.
- The ‘small gestures’ talk and little examples and ideas.
- The opportunity for the Sacrament of Reconciliation during the day.
- Fr Alan William’s session on pilgrimages and shrines.
- The enthusiasm of Sr. Josepha about children’s’ camps on Holy Island.
- The information given regarding the ‘Out Reach’ programme.
- Finding out more regarding reconciliation.
- “Small Gestures.”
- Workshop 4.
- Main speech and workshop.
- 1<sup>st</sup> Talk – thank you, raised issues.
- Workshop in Church / Newcastle – excellent.
- The workshops. Reaching out to others.
- How to make small gestures in parishes.
- The introductory talk by Clare for its effectiveness.
- Workshops 1 and 3 – how to reach out to other people.
- Use of film.
- Stress on listening.