

DIOCESE OF Hexham & Newcastle

# FORWARD TOGETHER IN HOPE

## POST CONFIRMATION SESSION

The session could also be used with young people as part of their journey towards Confirmation.

### **Introduction for catechists / leaders**

The Diocesan Confirmation Guidelines (Come kindle in Us the Fire of Your Love) offer suggestions for a follow-up session for those who have recently received the Sacrament of Confirmation called 'Adventure of Faith' (page 74). The session invites young people to continue their faith journey and to be courageous witnesses to the Gospel of Jesus. As we encourage the newly Confirmed to participate in the life and mission of the Church, we recognise the invaluable contribution they bring to us. In his invitation to young people to prepare for Confirmation, Bishop Séamus writes;

*'You are a vital part of the life and mission of the Church within our Diocese'.*

*Forward Together in Hope*, our journey of renewal in Hexham and Newcastle Diocese, is a call to each one of us, young and older, to explore and discern God's will for our Church both today and in the future. What could it be like? How best could we be missionary disciples bringing God's love to our world. At this time in our Diocese, we need more than ever the fresh eyes and energy of our young people. This session is an invitation to parishes to gather those who have received the Sacrament of Confirmation (or those who are preparing for Confirmation) and to involve them in this process.

Invite a representative group of adult parishioners to join the session with an ideal ratio of twice the number of young people to adults.



## Welcome and Gathering

Spend time allowing the young people and adults to get to know each other e.g. ask two young people and an adult to share with each other their earliest memory of church, their favourite memory of church, someone who inspired them on their faith journey etc. Move the adults to a different pair of young people for each question.

## Input

Ask the *Forward Together in Hope* representative to introduce the process of *Forward Together in Hope*. Explain that, as a parish, we have been asked to review and discuss how flourishing our community is (or is not) and how we feel it could develop in the future and that it is vital that young people are part of this process.

As part of *Forward Together in Hope*, everyone in the diocese had the opportunity to fill in an individual questionnaire. You may wish to play the video of young people talking about their fears, hopes and dreams for the Church, which was produced to introduce the questionnaire to young people. The video lasts for 3 minutes and is available in DVD disc form and via the *Forward Together in Hope* YouTube Channel -

[www.youtube.com/channel/UChT0VMXYZyhbb7jHE1p78ag](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UChT0VMXYZyhbb7jHE1p78ag), or you can search for *Forward Together in Hope* within YouTube.

## Faith Sharing

Small Groups: each question is allowed 4-5 minutes!

Place adults and young people in mixed groups. Each small group should begin with introductions. It is important that young people have the freedom to talk in the group and be heard in the feedback.

- 📌 Invite small groups to respond to the question: **'What is the Church for?'** and to come up with one group sentence which answers this question. Share these with the big group. If needed, ask the supplementary question 'Why do we need to go to Church to do this?'
- 📌 Pope Francis calls every baptised person to be a 'missionary disciple'. Invite small groups to respond to the question: **'What does a missionary disciple do?'** Share responses with the big group.
- 📌 How well do you feel our parish is doing in relation to the responses to the above questions? What evidence is there? Share responses with the big group.

Small groups 2:

*Divide the adults and young people.*

Young people

Ask the young people to discuss 'How can the presence and witness of young people be more encouraged and supported in the community?' (*This is the reflective question which all parishes have been asked to answer in the questionnaire*). The young people might begin by sharing what has encouraged and supported them in their own experience and what more they would have found helpful. Ask them to be as honest as they can.

Adults

Invite the adults to reflect on Pope Francis' words to young people at World Youth Day in Rio in 2013:

*'A people have a future if they go forward with both elements: with the young, who have the strength and move things forward because they do the carrying; and with the elderly because they are the ones who give life's wisdom'.*

How do we go forward together in our parish?

- 🍷 How often do adults share the 'wisdom' of their faith and experience with young people? Do young people feel they belong? What more could we do?
- 🍷 Do we make way for young people to move things forward? Are we willing to take on board their ideas?

### **Action Points**

Invite the young people to feed back their thoughts and discuss with the adults two action points to take forward.

### **Prayer and Scripture**

Gather in a comfortable prayer space with pens and paper available. Play quiet music.

Scripture Reading: Luke 4: 18-19

Ask everyone to think about how we are called in different ways to follow Jesus and how the Holy Spirit anoints us and pours out the gifts that enable us to live out our faith and bring good news to the poor.

Invite each person to write down a gift that they have which will help our parish to be a community of missionary disciples. The pieces of paper can be placed on a focal point.

Closing Prayer:

Glory be to the Father – in whom we live and move and have our being.

Glory be to the Son – whose name we bear and who calls each of us to be his disciples; to build his Kingdom and to go out into the world and bear its fruit.

Glory be to the Holy Spirit – pouring out grace and guidance, forming us and renewing us. Inspire us all in the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle to live the Gospel, to be open to change and to move forward together in hope.

### **Refreshments**

FORWARD TOGETHER  
<sup>IN</sup>  
**HOPE**

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