



CALL TO ACTION
METRO NY CHAPTER
Inspire Catholics, Transform Church



WHAT DO NY CATHOLICS WANT FOR THEIR CHURCH? THEY WANT IT TO BE *'THEIR CHURCH'*

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Call to Action Metro NY (Who We Are)

Call to Action (CTA) is a national Catholic organization committed to the reforms proposed by the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). The Council document *Lumen Gentium* in rejecting clericalism, legalism and triumphalism opened up new possibilities for ecclesial structures that would involve the wisdom and actions of the whole community. Unfortunately, apart from some commendable progress in the liturgical and ecumenical areas, the Vatican remains committed to old paradigms, in particular to maintaining male hierarchical control. Women are shut out of nearly all positions of power in the church to the clear detriment of the whole organization. CTA Metro New York, in full alignment with our national organization, continues to advocate strongly for radical change in this area so that the wisdom and spiritual insights of women will be heeded and reflected in all church policy deliberations. The sacrament of Holy Orders should be fully open to both sexes, including married people, especially at a time when there is a severe shortage of Catholic ministers. Call to Action looks to church and government for policies that combat the evils of racism. We are always on the side of the disadvantaged in housing and education and we stand with the LGBTQ community in their demands for fair treatment by church and state. Our members are especially engaged in remedying the gross unfairness of the American prison system where the poor always get inferior treatment and face major systemic obstacles in employment and housing when released.

DATA COLLECTION METHODOLOGY

Call to Action Metro NY has a dedicated membership and following interested in Catholic issues and Church reform. We conducted a brief public education campaign about the Synod and offered the following options to those who could not or preferred not to attend sessions at their local parish.

CTA Metro NY Synod 23 Listening Sessions: June 12th Virtual Session and Online Survey available from June 12th – June 24th, 2022. The June 12th session was open to those who preregistered for the event. There were 12 people present. Five questions were offered. The responses were noted and summarized. The online survey, which used the vehicle 'Survey Monkey' also required registration and was available to respondents from June 12th – June 24th, 2022. There were 13 people and a total of ten questions which were answered in text within the body of the survey. The responses were collected and summarized.

All who participated in either or both Listening Sessions did so anonymously.

SUMMARY

The overall responses from both Listening Sessions included women and men who identified as baptized Catholics mostly over the age of 50. They expressed a underlying love of their faith but an increasing disappointment and frustration at the unwillingness of the Church's hierarchy to recognize the voices of all its people. Recurring themes focused on the equal inclusion of women including as priests. Do away with archaic and outdated morality rules that exclude LGBTQ+ people, remarried and other Catholics who are on the margins. Refocus the Churches energies on the message of Jesus' love and not on the power needs of the hierarchy. Basically, the people want their Church back.

- **What does the Church mean to you? What sorrows and joys does it bring you and what could Church do to be a more meaningful experience?** Church is the people of God; A community to share the message of Jesus; not a building or the clergy, but in the heart. The Church saddens by its strive for absolute power; not recognizing the people of God as the Church; not being able to participate fully in the life and liturgy of my local parish. The joys are finding Christ in the sacredness, rituals, and sacraments I grew up with. It is time for the Church to give itself back to its people; we need to have ability to elect who serves in our parishes; be fully inclusive and teach Jesus' love for all.
- **Women are excluded from any essential leadership of Church. What changes would you like to see regarding women and the Church?** There is no justification for excluding women from priesthood; If women had more power, the crises in the Church would be quickly solved; women are equal creations. we need to get rid of archaic ideas and ordain women; Church history shows there has been women deacons and probably priests as well; lets fix this now and let women heal our Church.
- **Power and authority in the Church. Do people in the pews have authority/decision making? How can this be changed?** The sexual abuse crises could never have happened if parents had been involved in the authority of the Church; the people have the power but don't know how to loosen it from the grip of the clergy. Pastoral councils and other groups in parishes do not have real power; if you want your Church back, you have to take it!
- **Current Church rules allow for sexual acts only inside a marriage with intent to procreate. What reforms, if any, would you like to see to human sexuality rules in the Church?** End the Church's obsession with sex; Individually, we are the moral compass for ourselves; Jesus taught love, not exclusion. The Church needs to get with the 21st Century. Protect the real innocents, the poor and the hungry. Remarried Catholics denied the sacraments is ridiculous. Wasn't it Pope Francis who said "who am I to judge"?
- **If the Church were to make one big change' what would it be?** Fold up the tent, walk in the desert and listen to God; Revisit Vatican II; Stop obsessing over sex; Give the laity full say in their parishes; Let the people of God, who are our church, have voting rights for bishops, cardinals and the pope; Move from a hierarchal structure to a true Synodality including all.

Call to Action Metro New York

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