**Chill with Bishop – Responses (August 2017)**

**What do young people really ask of the Church in Aotearoa New Zealand?**

* Catechesis
  + If we understood the reasons for our faith, it would peak our interest and we would seek it out
  + Understanding faith and traditions – Saints, Mary, real presence in the Eucharist etc.
* For the church to be relatable to young people and our realities and issues
  + Show us how to be a 21st century Catholic
  + To listen to the young people and let them be heard
  + For the church to mobilise the young people to be involved
* Personal encounters with Christ
  + Find purpose in the church
  + Find self-worth and worth to God
  + Show us reasons to be Catholic
* Belonging and community
  + To feel welcomed and to welcome those on the outskirts (eg. broken families, those who don’t have the opportunity to attend church/youth groups)
* Resources for all of the above ^

**Do you think that the Church listens to what really goes on in young people’s lives? How do they do so? If not, how should they?**

* Yes
  + Only after the Pope said ‘listen’ – why weren’t they listening before?
    - More could have been done if they were listening before
  + They listen in specific parishes/parish councils, but some find it too much to listen
  + They listen, but they do not act!
    - Some say church’s answer seems one minded and should look for different alternatives, although be wary of becoming too ‘liberal’
* No
  + Only listens to those with the opportunity to voice their thoughts, not those who are deprived of opportunity to join church/youth group
  + Lots of people leaving, shows that the church doesn’t listen
  + People who aren’t of faith feel like church isn’t relatable
  + Not approachable and intimidating
  + Should bridge generational gap and be more inclusive
* Suggestions
  + Need more spiritual direction, counselling – more friendly + more advertising for these ‘services’
  + Have the youth empower the youth – like WYD and other such events + have opportunity to form relationships with other, different youth
  + Starts at base of faith – have families involved
  + Needs to be an ongoing thing – this is only the start
  + Open up discussion on current issues, especially harder topics

**What are the main challenges and most significant opportunities for young people in Aotearoa New Zealand?**

* Challenges
  + Finding purpose and the meaning of life
  + Responsibilities – youth are expected to take up more than they can handle
  + Money
  + Being equipped to evangelise
  + Understanding the faith and homilies, and defending the faith
  + Overall wellbeing
    - Identity confusion
    - Depression
    - Confidence
  + Morality shift – things that were socially acceptable years ago are now normal
    - Secularism
    - Peer pressure
    - Alcohol
  + Education
    - Catholic schools – have formation of RE teachers
  + Finding someone trustworthy to talk to
    - Feeling welcomed
    - Finding people of same faith and belief as you
  + Information age – how to filter and how not to be swayed by wrong stuff
  + Lack of enthusiasm
    - How do we get people to keep coming back to church and receive different opportunities to lead and be connected with faith?
  + Youth activities – how to get a good balance of social and spiritual
* Opportunities
  + There are many people who you can talk to
  + Information access and being well connected
  + Resources available – retreats, outreach programmes, youth groups, contributing to community, mission, counselling, mentorship etc.
  + Vocation discernment
  + Freedom to express yourself
  + General opportunities eg. sport, music etc.