



Conforti Institute

Anti-Sectarianism Project Report

April 2014

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Executive Summary

This report presents the findings of the Conforti Institute's anti-sectarian project, part of a wider programme to tackle sectarianism promoted and funded by the Scottish Government. Our project in this phase has been about giving members of the Catholic community the chance to give witness and voice to their experiences and perceptions of sectarianism in Scotland today. We did this primarily through holding listening exercises within Catholic parishes. Beyond parishes we also listened to a number of people who self-identified as Catholic but who, for the purposes of this research, were part of a group not recognised as belonging to a Catholic institution.¹ So far our project has reached the archdioceses of Glasgow and St. Andrews and Edinburgh and the dioceses of Motherwell, Dunkeld, Paisley, Galloway and Aberdeen. To March 2014 we carried out 52 listening exercises covering 57 parishes and 11 groups and we listened to 553 people.

It should be clear that we cannot and do not claim that the findings of our project are *representative* of the Catholic community as a whole. They can only be taken to be representative of the people who chose to accept our open invitation to take part in the process.

Project Findings

The Catholic community does not speak with one voice on sectarianism. It both means different things for different people and is experienced in different ways. Some of the most noteworthy findings are:

Orange Walks: Orange walks and their effects are still of considerable concern to some people, especially from Glasgow, Motherwell and Galloway diocese, but for others they are more of an inconvenience and something that people have adapted to, albeit through a strategy of avoidance.

Catholic Schools: Many felt that Catholic schools are an easy target to blame for sectarian attitudes and behaviour but this is unjust. Repeatedly it was pointed out that Catholic schools model tolerance and are well respected for their ethos and value system as demonstrated by the fact that people of all faiths and none make a positive choice to send their children to them.

The Media: The media is perceived as having a particularly negative influence on sectarianism. Social media is where young people believe there to be the biggest problem. Some in the Catholic laity do not feel well represented by public statements made in their name.

The Constitutional Settlement: The constitutional settlement and the fact that Catholics cannot accede to the throne still rankles with many and is seen as being part of a wider institutional problem of anti-Catholicism by some.

Anti-Catholicism: The perception of sectarianism primarily being about anti-Catholicism in Scotland is a topic of debate. Some would still take that view, others believe that things have moved on considerably or believe that both an anti-Christian and secular agenda is more important.

Football/Old Firm: Whilst football and the old firm are seen as contributing to sectarianism, they are of less significance than anticipated.

Banter: Banter and when it is and is not acceptable was the topic of considerable discussion, with a significant minority viewpoint being that it is more acceptable to mock the Catholic faith, beliefs and traditions than it is to mock other faith traditions or beliefs.

¹ A full list of the parishes and groups we listened to is in Annex One

Subtle Sectarianism: In a significant number of consultations reference was made to sectarianism being more covert, insidious and subtle now in comparison to the more open and aggressive form it took in the past. Some referred to an undercurrent of sectarian attitudes, feelings and behaviour which is difficult to pinpoint and difficult to prove in law, but it is still there.

Geographical Differences: The general assumption is that problems related to sectarianism are confined to the west coast of Scotland. That opinion was expressed often, but we also heard people saying that sectarianism takes different forms in different parts of the country. In the north and east many felt its manifestations were more covert and subtle.

Anti-Irish Racism: A minority of people believe that the term 'anti-Irish racism' would be a better descriptor of the problem in Scotland than 'sectarianism' and that anti-Irish republican sentiment is conflated with anti-Irish and anti-Catholic sentiment.

Class: Class is part of the picture. If you are of a certain class/have economic resources you can choose to avoid the worst effects of sectarianism

Unconscious Denial: Although not openly discussed nor acknowledged, there is an unconscious denial from some individuals of how sectarianism affects them; over time they have developed unacknowledged coping strategies.

Victimhood: In consultations in three diocese participants pointed to a victimhood mentality evident amongst some Catholics and argued that we need to move beyond that and be willing to look at ourselves and our own prejudices.

Scottish Independence: In a small number of consultations a fear was expressed that the situation will get worse for Catholics if Scotland votes for Independence in 2014, although this view was not shared by every participant in the groups.

Proposals for Tackling Sectarianism

Participants in our listening exercises made the following proposals to tackle sectarianism:

Look inwards and move beyond victimhood: Participants spoke about the need to be confident of who and what we are and why we are Catholic; the need for positive leadership and the need to improve Catholic representation in the media.

Education: Whilst it was agreed that education starts in the home, recommendations were made around reducing ignorance by creating opportunities for shared activities, including the bringing together of school communities for different activities, and also around educating adults as well as children and using a sustained approach for all.

Ecumenism: In a number of parishes it was said that progress is being made regarding ecumenical relationships and there are increasing signs of public unity. Elsewhere it was felt that more could still be done to improve on this. Some concrete ways to build on and improve ecumenical relationships mentioned were: be open to short and long-term sharing of church spaces; put the emphasis on what faith communities have in common; encourage [high profile] priests and ministers to work together, and hold more interfaith services.

Promotion of tolerance, respect and understanding: Deal with what were perceived excesses of orange walks; promote a no tolerance approach to sectarianism in the workplace, including the use of sectarian 'banter.'

Challenge institutional sectarianism: Improving the behaviour of the media and the police and promoting more engagement of Catholics and Christians in elected positions in parliament were mentioned in relation to challenging 'institutional' sectarianism. The need for a more precise definition of what constitutes sectarianism and sectarian offense, particularly in relation to sectarian songs, was mentioned, as was a warning on the limitations of legislation.

The next phase of our work will be action planning stage when we support those who wish to take action on identified issues in their own communities.

Introduction

The Conforti Institute is a Catholic missionary institute which promotes diversity as positive and good, challenging prejudice, ignorance and intolerance at all levels and making connections across cultures and faiths. For the last 15 months Conforti has been involved in an anti-sectarianism project as part of a much wider programme of work promoted and funded by the Scottish Government to tackle sectarianism in Scotland.² Our project in this phase has been about giving the Catholic community the chance to give witness and voice to their own experiences and perceptions of sectarianism in Scotland today. We did this through holding listening exercises in focus groups within parishes and with Catholic groups. Through doing this we hope to develop a shared understanding within the Catholic community about the issues, relationships, systems and structures which perpetuate sectarianism. The next phase of our project will be about supporting communities to develop action plans around common agendas to tackle sectarianism, both within and beyond the Catholic community.

This report captures findings from listening exercises carried out to March 2014. We originally planned to complete our listening exercises by summer 2013. This did not happen for a number of reasons:

- more reluctance than expected from some parish communities to talk about sectarianism which meant we reached a lower number of parishes than expected in early stages
- a very difficult year for the Catholic Church in 2013 due to scandals associated not least with its leader in Scotland, Cardinal O'Brien, which contributed to the some people wanting to keep their head down. One participant of a group referred to the revelations being "a massive knock-back for people's confidence"
- the decision to expand listening exercises to more dioceses, and to increase the number of listening exercises carried out in each diocese in order to get a better sense of what the Catholic community has to say in different parts of the country

The Project and Methodology

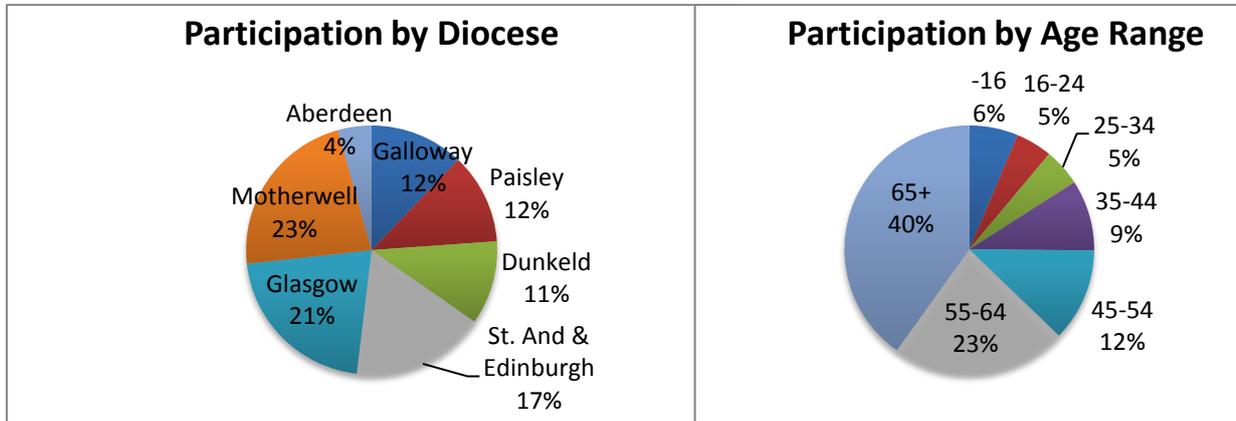
The Catholic community in Scotland is currently organised into the two archdiocese of St. Andrews & Edinburgh and Glasgow and 6 dioceses of Motherwell; Dunkeld; Paisley; Galloway; Aberdeen and Argyll and the Isles. Our project reached the two Archdiocese in the central belt plus Motherwell; Dunkeld; Paisley; Galloway and Aberdeen.³

We carried out two pilot sessions in Motherwell and Glasgow in order to develop a listening model and tested this out throughout Motherwell. The model consisted of a session plan and feedback form which were completed after each focus group. The three key areas for discussion in the listening exercises were: *What does sectarianism mean for you? How does your community experience sectarianism and How does it affect you?* The listening exercises lasted approximately 2 hours and took place in the evening in order to allow the working population to take part. Once a priest agreed to help us access parishioners, and a couple of weeks prior to the exercise, we sent a poster to advertise the event in the church, inserted an item in the parish bulletin and asked the priest to advertise the event verbally at mass. Whilst we kept attendance at the events open to all we also asked priests to identify particular parishioners who they thought would be interested in attending such an event to invite them along personally.

² The Conforti Institute thanks the Scottish Government for funding this project

³ For a list of parishes consulted see Annex 1. We also planned to reach Argyll and the Isles but in the end did not have enough time to do so prior to this final report. We still plan to go there.

Due to early difficulties in accessing parishes willing to take part in Motherwell Diocese we decided to expand our remit to Catholic groups which come together for activities not necessarily attached to a particular parish. We also carried out individual interviews where we thought this could contribute to our overall understanding of the Catholic community's experience. To March 2014 we carried out 52 listening exercises covering 57 parishes and 11 groups reaching 553 people.⁴ The breakdown of male/female was 51%/ 49%.



In order to compile this report the feedback forms for each diocese were analysed and drawn together into a diocesan report which identified how frequently and in what ways the different issues (orange walks, football/old firm; separate schools etc.) were mentioned in the diocese to get an overall sense of how important this issue was to the participants. The next stage was for the diocesan reports to be compared and the same process of identifying the frequency/importance of references to each issue identified. In this way we arrived at the categorisation of the most frequently occurring themes outlined below with the most occurring first.

A number of provisos should be mentioned:

Firstly, we have to be clear that we cannot and do not claim that the emerging conclusions of this report are *representative* of the Catholic community as a whole. They can only be taken to be representative of the people who chose to accept our open invitation to take part in the process. On the whole these people came from older age ranges (a reflection of the age profile of those active within parish communities) which led us to make a particular effort to identify places where we could hear the voice of younger Catholics. It should also be said that, particularly in some diocese and parishes, we were disappointed at the turn-out of people willing to talk, a disappointment echoed by a number of participants themselves.

Secondly, our research has been qualitative. We originally considered combining this with a survey-based approach but quickly reached the conclusion that Conforti's main added value was our ability to tap into the experiences and feelings of the Catholic community due to favoured access through diocesan and parish structures and our shared identity. We decided to use these relative advantages to focus on accessing richer, more in-depth data than would be possible using a survey-type approach.

Thirdly, it is almost inevitable that in using such an approach an element of subjectivity will creep into research findings and interpretation. We tried to mitigate this by always having two people present at the listening exercises, ensuring that the feedback was checked by both participants and double checking the interpretation of findings.

⁴ A number of the listening exercises included more than one parish

Fourthly, our categorisation of the most frequently occurring themes presents an overall picture but doesn't always capture nuances in different diocese. We try to capture the most significant of these in our reporting.

Project Findings

This section sets out the most frequently occurring themes in the listening exercises in order of their occurrence with the most frequent first. These are organised into discussion around the three key questions asked: *What does sectarianism mean for you?* *How does your community experience sectarianism?* and, *How does it affect you?* In the discussions there was a good deal of cross-over between these three questions and it hasn't always been easy to separate responses. Nevertheless, for ease of understanding we have organised this report along the same lines as the information was captured in the feedback forms. Responses are also grouped into 'most discussed' issues and 'secondary tier' issues in each section. Footnotes are used to identify in which consultation and in which diocese opinions were expressed with the following shorthand: St. Andrews and Edinburgh (E plus a number); Glasgow (G plus a number); Motherwell (M plus a number); Galloway (GW plus a number); Paisley (P plus a number); Dunkeld (D plus a number); Aberdeen (A plus a number).⁵ The same system has been used for individual interviews (I plus a number). Throughout the report when a town/diocese name is mentioned (e.g. Glasgow, Paisley, Aberdeen, Motherwell) this refers to the diocese and not to the town itself.

⁵ How each number corresponds to each consultation in the different diocese is not revealed to ensure anonymity for those who took part.

PART ONE: What does sectarianism mean for you?

We made a deliberate choice not to define sectarianism for participants in order not to put restrictions/boundaries around the conversation and to allow us to capture personal perceptions and experiences.

Most discussed issues

1.1 Orange Walks

In considering what sectarianism means for Catholics the most frequently occurring theme was orange walks. This was a key topic of discussion in Glasgow and Motherwell dioceses with lesser prominence in Galloway, Dunkeld, Paisley, St. Andrews and Edinburgh and Aberdeen. Recurring themes were:

Orange Walks as a sign of hatred and triumphalism; something to be feared - A considerable number of individuals in consultations in Glasgow, Dunkeld, Motherwell, Paisley and Edinburgh understand orange walks to be an expression of hatred against the Catholic community, and variously described feeling fear and a sense of unease, being intimidated, threatened and offended when they think about them.⁶ Some felt that orange walks are about triumphalism, the Protestant religion displaying superiority or "trying to get one over on us".⁷ One young girl commented "if you marched as a celebration of killing Protestants you would get arrested."⁸ Associated with this was the idea that orange walks are a deliberate provocation of Catholics.⁹ However, in one consultation, and in reference to the motivations behind why people choose to participate, it was mentioned that being a part of orange walks could enhance an individual's status, a sense of belonging and self-esteem; they need not only be an expression of hatred.¹⁰

Decreasing in Strength/Number and more of an Inconvenience - Notwithstanding these comments, a considerable number of individuals also believed that orange walks are becoming less of an issue now and the number of followers are diminishing, although differences of opinion were often expressed on the latter point.¹¹ A prevailing viewpoint amongst the former group was that walks are more of a minor inconvenience than a threat. In one consultation the view was expressed that the character and significance of orange walks is changing: they are not as unpleasant as before.¹² Others thought that a big effort had been made to clean up the image of the Orange Order, but this masks the fact it is still a sectarian organisation.¹³ In Aberdeen diocese the actions of the city council in acting quickly to ensure that orange walks did not become a fixture in the city was applauded.¹⁴ The impact of walks on communities is discussed more in the section below on how communities experience sectarianism.

Proportionality - In a few consultations people felt that the number of walks allowed is out of proportion to the size of the population active within the Orange Lodge. In Glasgow where orange

⁶ G2; G3; G4; G5; G10; D3; E2; E4; E5; M9; P5;P6

⁷ G4; G6

⁸ G4

⁹ D2; G4

¹⁰ D5

¹¹ G2; G3; G6; G7; P1; GW4; M3; M7; M8; P5;P6

¹² E5

¹³ M9

¹⁴ A2

walks are prominent 12 weeks of practising and walking was seen as excessive.¹⁵ The fact that so many are allowed to go ahead was considered to be evidence of "institutionalised sectarianism."¹⁶

Policing Costs - Concern was expressed at the cost of policing orange marches and the fact that a sufficient proportion of this cost is not borne by the marchers but rather by the tax-payer.¹⁷

Freedom to march - Whilst some felt that all marches (both orange and republican) should be banned, a minority view was that allowing public witness of identity is important and it would be foolish and possibly dangerous to drive this underground.¹⁸ A 'middle-way' solution mentioned by a number of people was that negative impacts of marches on local communities could be limited by confining them to public parks.¹⁹

1.2 Debates around Denominational/Non-Denominational Schools

This was a key topic of discussion in Glasgow, Galloway, Dunkeld, Motherwell and Paisley with lesser prominence in St. Andrews and Edinburgh and Aberdeen. Early in our project we identified the risk that parts of the Catholic community may not want to talk about sectarianism because they fear that even raising this issue invites the response that sectarianism will be solved in Scotland with the closure of Catholic schools. Even raising this issue is therefore perceived by some as a threat. This risk we identified was borne out by some of the participants in this process raising precisely that point.²⁰

An easy target to blame for sectarian attitudes/behaviour - A number of people across different diocese mentioned that Catholic schools are an easy target to blame for sectarian behaviour.²¹ There was also some consternation about recent comments from Sheriff Richard Davidson who, in clearing a Celtic fan of singing sectarian songs, said the way to tackle sectarianism would be to abolish denominational schools. It was felt that the Scottish Government's failure to rebuke Sheriff Davidson for such remarks was an example of how sectarianism is 'institutionalised' in Scotland.²²

Need for dispassionate and intelligent debate - In Galloway, Dunkeld and Paisley there was considerable discussion about the need for a widely disseminated articulation of the arguments on why Catholic education is worth defending.²³ The ethos and value system of Catholic education was mentioned in most consultations across all dioceses, along with the fact that the Catholic system appears to be admired by others with Catholic schools being oversubscribed in many parts of the country. However, some also said that requested placements at Catholic schools may also be due to educational attainment being higher, and it is not always 100% clear if or in what way educational attainment is linked to the values and ethos of the school.²⁴ Some participants commented that the Catholic community needs to examine its own motivations in promoting the continuation of Catholic schools; especially if one of these is to absolve parents of their own responsibilities in bringing up children in the faith.²⁵ The point was also made that if the community loses Catholic schools it will be partly due to its own loss of interest, and not only due to something being imposed.²⁶

¹⁵ G5

¹⁶ G3; G10; GW4

¹⁷ G5; M6; P2

¹⁸ E5

¹⁹ G5; D1; M9; M10

²⁰ D5

²¹ P1; P2; P5; P9; D2; D3; M9; E3; G12

²² P2; GW3

²³ GW1; GW2; D4; P2

²⁴ D4

²⁵ P4; GW3

²⁶ GW1

A couple of counter arguments to those that are often put forward against the continuation of Catholic schools were made. The first was that separate schools have not led to divisions in other countries such as England, Canada and Australia²⁷. The second was that the reluctance of the secular public to pay for Catholic schools through their taxes was a false argument: Catholics also pay taxes and children's education needs to be paid for, whether under a denominational system or not.²⁸

Joint campuses - The question of Catholic images and symbols in joint campus schools was mentioned as a problem in Motherwell diocese. In one case there was a lot of opposition to the joint campus, and the parish community feels that their opinions were not properly considered. There was a petition and a sit-in, but to no avail. Their perception was that the local council did not listen to their points of view.²⁹ In the case of two parishes there was also some discontent around objections to Catholic symbols such as crucifixes being allowed in common areas, and also in one case in an area within the Catholic school which was visible through glass doors from the common area. There was also some consternation about a photo and headline in a local newspaper referring to the "offending crucifixes."³⁰ The perception of those concerned about this issue was that the tensions/division around joint campuses hadn't really been worked out.

In a parish in Paisley diocese the opinion was aired that some in the Catholic community feel that joint campuses are a first step towards abolishing Catholic education.³¹ The general feeling in this parish was that joint campuses would be a good thing, but that Catholic parents can be obstructive because of this perceived threat. The group felt that success or failure of joint campuses would depend largely on the leadership of the head teachers involved. Elsewhere, in Motherwell diocese, a positive example was mentioned where a reward was issued from Nil by Mouth because a fence had been taken down between neighbouring Catholic/non-denominational schools, and this had not diluted the faith element in the Catholic school. In this same area it was felt that a non-denominational nursery school within a Catholic primary school campus had helped to break down barriers. Non-Catholic parents who had sent their children to the nursery school made the positive choice to send their children to the Catholic primary.³²

Preferential Treatment - In St. Andrew's and Edinburgh and Dunkeld diocese, in areas where the Catholic community is very much in the minority, a couple of cases of tensions around primary school provision were mentioned where it was felt that the local community was resentful of what they regarded as preferential treatment for the Catholic population since class sizes were smaller than in non-denominational schools.³³

1.3 Role of media in fuelling sectarianism

The media's role in fuelling negative aspects of sectarian attitudes and behaviour, in particular referring to the publicity surrounding football, was mentioned across all the diocese. Most people agreed that there is a tendency to focus on the negative and it is difficult to get any attention paid to positive stories, with a lack of focus on solutions "*the media thrives on sectarianism and won't allow it to go away.*"³⁴

²⁷ D3

²⁸ P2;

²⁹ M6

³⁰ M6; M7

³¹ P7

³² M12

³³ E6; D1

³⁴ G5

Intrinsic Bias Against Catholics? - Some felt that the media does not portray a balanced view of Catholics, with some thinking there is an intrinsic bias.³⁵ When pushed to explain in what way this bias is manifest the response was that it can be seen in the print media in the letters which are published and also in the subtle way that it is mentioned that someone is Catholic if it is a negative story when the person's faith has no relevance to the story's content (The Herald and the Daily Record came in for particular criticism in the print media)³⁶. A concrete example given was the different way in which the Jimmy Saville abuse story was covered. In England people were not aware of there being any mention of the fact that he was Catholic. In Scotland coverage did mention this and included photos of Jimmy Saville with Cardinal O'Brien and the Pope.³⁷ A considerable number of people felt that the coverage of Cardinal O'Brien's downfall was excessive, with 5 special programmes commissioned by the BBC and Channel 4 also coming in for criticism.³⁸ A minority of people disagreed, saying that the media showed relative restraint.³⁹ Another concrete example came from a local paper from northern Scotland covering a story about a new stained glass window of a female saint for the parish church. The reporter dug around and found that the saint who had been canonised had exposed a paedophile priest, so the story's headline included reference to the paedophile priest.⁴⁰ It was also mentioned that some of the biggest events in the Catholic calendar get very little or no coverage in the press. World Youth Day in Brazil where two million people participated was given as one example.⁴¹

In one consultation there was quite a strong message that the damage currently being experienced by the Catholic Church has been self-inflicted, with particular reference to perceived cover-ups and a lack of transparency. These voices indicated that the Church will suffer more for what were perceived as cover-ups than for the original action, even if the cover-ups took place for what some may have considered to be the "greater good".⁴²

In addition, with reference to an 'anti-Catholic' bias, a small number of people also believe that the media displays an atheist, anti-religious agenda, with one comment that this is more prevalent in Scotland than elsewhere.⁴³

Social Media - Amongst younger participants social media was identified as the place where both sectarianism and anti-religious sentiment is seen most.⁴⁴ Facebook and Twitter are used as tools to wind people up, with a feeling that more extreme things can be expressed because the 'receiver' is not face-to-face, and this happens on all sides.⁴⁵ Creating a permanent record of opinions, thoughts and feelings was perceived as being something quite dangerous, and it was felt that more people needed to understand and act on the fact that you cannot hide behind an online identity.⁴⁶ However, social media was also seen as being a way to challenge the stronghold that print/broadcasting media have always had " *the [print and broadcasting] media had it their own way for a long time; now with social media it is easier to get info about what is going on.*"⁴⁷

³⁵ P5; G3; G7; G10; G12; GW2; A2

³⁶ GW1; GW2; D3; P2; G12

³⁷ G5; G7

³⁸ G7; A2

³⁹ E5

⁴⁰ A1

⁴¹ P5

⁴² D3

⁴³ G12; D3

⁴⁴ G5; P9; G10; M7

⁴⁵ G5; P7; D1

⁴⁶ P9

⁴⁷ G6

Representation by the Scottish Catholic Media Office (SCMO) "Not in My Name" - In Dunkeld, Galloway, Paisley and Aberdeen dioceses the point also came up that some people do not feel that they have been well represented by the SCMO.⁴⁸ In particular this was in response to comments made by SCMO Director Peter Kearney that Scotland is a hostile place for Catholics, in one case drawing an analogy to the way black citizens were treated in the USA in the 1950s and 1960s.⁴⁹ The participants who commented on this wanted to make clear that the SCMO does not speak in their name. Another opinion expressed was that the SCMO has too strong a focus on the central belt.⁵⁰

1.4 The Constitutional Settlement

The fact that Catholics cannot accede to the throne in the UK was mentioned in most consultations in Glasgow and was also brought up in Motherwell, St. Andrews and Edinburgh, Galloway, Paisley and Aberdeen.⁵¹ One person's comment captures the feeling of a good deal of the input "*The real issue is that Catholics are treated constitutionally as 2nd class citizens. The Scottish Government is fudging the issue; this is really about institutionalised sectarianism.*"⁵² In addition to the fact that Catholics cannot accede to the throne in the UK there was a relatively widespread belief that Catholics cannot serve as Prime Minister, with the fact that Tony Blair waited until he left office before he converted to Catholicism mentioned.⁵³ Taken together these are seen as forms of top-down discrimination against Catholics.

1.5 Anti-Catholicism, Attack on Christianity or Creeping Secularisation?

Linked to the discussion of the media portraying an anti-Catholic and according to some an anti-religious agenda was a broader discussion on the attitudes of society in general. This issue was discussed in every diocese. Generally the discussion would begin by someone saying they felt there was still an ingrained anti-Catholic bias in Scottish society. When probed some would make generalisations "*We live in a Protestant country and they are going to look after their own.*"⁵⁴ Reference was also made to the belief that there is residual suspicion of Catholics carried over from the reformation⁵⁵ and that Scottish people have a poor understanding of their own history "*we were originally a Catholic country.*"⁵⁶ A distinction was made regarding how anti-Catholicism is experienced in the area surrounding Aberdeen where a number of rich indigenous landowners were and still are Catholic and the experience of Irish Catholics in the central west. "*More care had to be taken because if sectarian remarks were made you might be making them to your landlord.*"⁵⁷

In some cases there would be concrete stories of perceived anti-Catholicism. A couple of times the experience of being a convert to Catholicism was mentioned. One lady spoke movingly of how people did not react well to her conversion. She felt she had been shunned by a circle of friends, including friends from her old church, who stopped talking to her.⁵⁸ In another case the parish priest said that every year when mixed couples preparing for marriage have an initial conversation with the priest the question of whether any children will be brought up Catholic is mentioned. Each year in a handful of cases, the non-Catholic partner reacts quite strongly against that idea. It seems like they are saying it is ok to marry a Catholic, but not to live like a Catholic, this would be one step too far.⁵⁹

⁴⁸ GW4; D3; P3; A1

⁴⁹ See Braiden, Gerry 'Church : Bigotry fight like US civil rights struggle' *The Herald* 8.2.2013

⁵⁰ A1

⁵¹ M1; M5; M10; M12; G1; G4; G5; G7; G8; G10; G12; E3; E5; GW4; P3; A2

⁵² GW4 also mentioned in E5;

⁵³ E3

⁵⁴ G10

⁵⁵ E6; A2

⁵⁶ A2

⁵⁷ A2

⁵⁸ E2

⁵⁹ E7

Elsewhere another parish priest referred to people he knew who would like to convert to Catholicism but have felt restrained by the negative reaction they knew they would get from their families.⁶⁰ In another place reference was made to the statistics on religiously aggravated crime which show that for 2012-2013 in 56.3% (388) of the cases conduct was derogatory towards Catholicism.⁶¹

One consequence of perceived anti-Catholicism mentioned was a degree of reluctance to be "out there" as a Catholic. One man said one of the reasons he had chosen not to send his children to Catholic school was because he didn't want his children easily identifiable as being Catholic. In a similar vein, he had taken care to choose neutral names.⁶²

*"Sectarianism is not the issue now; it's more an anti-religious secular agenda."*⁶³ In slightly more than a third of the consultations the discussion of anti-Catholicism would lead to people saying there is an attack on Christianity in Scotland, with further contributions that people are anti-faith in general and a creeping secular agenda is becoming more prominent.⁶⁴ Law-making, in particular around same sex marriage, was mentioned as one place the 'creeping secular agenda' is evident.⁶⁵ Another contribution was that humanists are far stronger in Scotland than anywhere outside London or Brighton.⁶⁶

Relationship between sectarianism and the numbers practising a religion. A couple of different opinions were evident around whether or not sectarian attitudes and behaviour had waned given that less people practise religion. Some thought they had.⁶⁷ Others questioned why they still see sectarian attitudes when less people are practising.⁶⁸ One person reflected on people who *"have enough religion to hate others, but not quite enough to love them."*⁶⁹

*"The Scottish Government won't listen to the Catholic voice."*⁷⁰ In a few listening exercises some scepticism was expressed around whether or not the Scottish Government would listen to the Catholic voice as a result of this project. Legislation around same-sex marriage was mentioned as one area where it was felt the Catholic (and other opposing voices) were ignored. It was felt that secular groups were given more credence than their size would merit and that the Government would not take action along the lines promoted by the Catholic Church given the influence of secular groups in society.⁷¹

⁶⁰ M7

⁶¹ P4 See the Scottish Government's report on *Religiously Aggravated Offending in Scotland 2012-2013* available at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0042/00424865.pdf> accessed 31.3.2014. The interpretation of these statistics is, however, contested. According to the Scottish Government's report *"The majority of the victims were police officers, the general community and workers". This suggests that for the majority of charges it is unlikely the accused knew the religious affiliation/belief of the victim at the time of incident and that the attacks were more arbitrary in nature.*" p16

⁶² A1

⁶³ GW2

⁶⁴ G7; G10; G11; G12; A1; A2; P2; P5; P9; GW2; GW4; D2; D3; E1; E4; E5; E6; E8; M12

⁶⁵ E5

⁶⁶ E5

⁶⁷ P8

⁶⁸ P9

⁶⁹ P8

⁷⁰ A2

⁷¹ A2; E5

1.6 Issues around Football/Old Firm

Five of the thirteen consultations in Glasgow had football/old firm as a key issue for discussion.⁷² Elsewhere it was referred to variously as an aggravating factor, one of the main things contributing to sectarianism, and as a catalyst which allows attitudes and behaviours which are normally hidden to emerge, but the conversation did not dwell on the issue of football, quickly moving on to other topics. In some places the idea was floated that too much emphasis is put on football as an explanatory factor for sectarianism; that the problem is a broader societal problem which is not confined to football hooligans.⁷³

Football, Catholicism and anti-Irish abuse - A significant part of the discussion in Glasgow and in some parts of Paisley diocese was related to the perception that Celtic fans are on the receiving end of a very particular kind of anti-Irish abuse connected to their Catholic identity which is somehow worse and *not* equivalent to the abuse targeted at others. The testimony of a young school boy is illustrative:

"We get told to 'go home, the famine is over' at football. Even though it's meant to be illegal it still happens. People make fun of the famine by throwing potatoes and calling us 'tattie pickers/munchers'. This is mocking a tragedy which killed a million people which could have been prevented if Britain ruled properly".⁷⁴

Elsewhere it was stated that there would be trouble in the local community if Rangers got beat *"In the past we have had potatoes thrown at us at old firm matches with nails in them."*⁷⁵ It was felt that the kind of anti-Irish racist abuse heard at football matches wouldn't be accepted if being shouted at Scottish-born or Scottish-based fans of other countries, for example, Pakistan or India at cricket matches.⁷⁶

On a number of occasion's comments made by Kenny McAskill praising the crowd's behaviour at the Hampden Cup Final in March 2011 was mentioned.⁷⁷ According to the Celtic fans present the behaviour of Rangers fans had been disgraceful and included the singing of The Famine Song. Another Rangers away game was also mentioned when sectarian language including alleged reference to 'Paedos', 'Fuck The Pope' and 'Fenian Blood' was captured on film and the TV company apologised on air and made an official complaint.⁷⁸ A young girl captured the feeling expressed by a number of people that the songs sung by Celtic are different because they are political in nature: *"Singing Irish songs at Celtic matches are not necessarily sectarian, as it is celebrating our Irish heritage which founded our club - it's not the same as singing The Sash or The Famine Song which are songs of hate."*⁷⁹

Beyond the 90 minute bigot - The idea of the 90 minute bigot was also discussed with individuals from two separate groups making the point that football abuse is far from exclusively Scottish⁸⁰ and another saying that at football matches anything will be shouted to provoke the other side; racist,

⁷² G3; G4; G5; G6;G8

⁷³ G6; G8; D4

⁷⁴ G4

⁷⁵ P7

⁷⁶ G6

⁷⁷ G6; G8; G9

⁷⁸ G6 the reference was to a 3rd division tie in Berwick in February 2013. ESPN was the television company which made the complaint. There were two arrests for sectarian offenses at the match and Rangers admonished the supporters during the interval. See <http://www.heraldscotland.com/sport/football/berwick-1-rangers-3-sectarian-and-self-harming.20313155>

⁷⁹ G4 also mentioned in G7

⁸⁰ G6 and G9

homophobic and bigoted things, and that in Scotland this happens on both sides of the divide.⁸¹ These opinions captured a feeling that those who want to will find reasons to hate the "other", whether based on religion, territorial allegiance or something else. However, the point was also made that "most football fans are not bigots."⁸²

In some places the 'knock-on' effects of old firm rivalry were mentioned beyond the football pitch and beyond the central belt of Scotland. Ferries coming from Northern Ireland for old firm matches were mentioned as a particular trouble-spot.⁸³ Elsewhere, in the north of the country the story was told of a construction worker who lost his job when he placed a Rangers top inside the fabric of a new Catholic church.⁸⁴

Sectarianism, football and personal safety - In a few listening exercises there was a discussion around the wearing of football colours and how this relates to personal safety. Some parents and some young people expressed reluctance to wear, or to allow their children to go out wearing football colours because they thought this would be to invite trouble.⁸⁵ In one exercise the story was told of a man being slashed with a knife for wearing a Celtic top,⁸⁶ whilst elsewhere another man said that just wearing a Celtic scarf means he is looked at like a criminal.⁸⁷ Elsewhere a parent expressed reluctance to even allow her children to play football because she was afraid her children would be subject to sectarian abuse.⁸⁸ In a couple of further listening exercises the opinion was expressed that sectarianism is rife throughout Scottish football, including at local club level.⁸⁹

Response of the clubs - Regarding the behaviour of Celtic and Rangers clubs the opinion was expressed in one listening exercise that they had been making honest attempts to educate their own fan-base, but that more could be done. Linked to this was the idea that if you take sectarian rivalry out of football you take the fun out of it.⁹⁰ In a number of listening exercises it was felt that things had improved since both clubs were no longer members of the same league. However, there was concern that problems could re-emerge in the event of Rangers and Celtic playing each other again regularly.⁹¹

Offensive Behaviour Bill - Broad and Ineffective - Perceived inadequacies in the Offensive Behaviour Bill were mentioned in a significant number of consultations in Glasgow, Paisley and Galloway and also in Motherwell and Dunkeld.⁹² It was felt that this was rushed in; that it criminalises and demonises football fans and that it is too broad and ineffective. In relation to this the opinion was expressed that the Scottish Government needs to come up with a better definition of what is and what isn't sectarian behaviour; there needs to be more clarity on what people can and can't say.⁹³ Contrasting this, in one exercise one man expressed the opinion that legislation and the zero tolerance approach taken to sectarian behaviour related to football *is* starting to make a difference.⁹⁴

⁸¹ G5

⁸² P8

⁸³ G12

⁸⁴ A1

⁸⁵ E1; P7; GW3

⁸⁶ G4

⁸⁷ P6

⁸⁸ D3

⁸⁹ GW1; M5

⁹⁰ G13

⁹¹ G12; M12; E6; G9; D1; GW3

⁹² G4; G5; G6; G7; GW1; GW2; GW3; P6; P7; P9; D1; M11; M12

⁹³ G5

⁹⁴ M12

Secondary Tier Issues

1.7 Anti-Irish Racism

Beyond the dynamics of the football terraces there was discussion about the relationship between sectarianism and anti-Irish racism in society in general. In one Motherwell parish participants felt that anti-Irish racism as opposed to sectarianism was the key issue,⁹⁵ but this issue was often contested. In Glasgow one person commented that Scotland is much more multicultural now and you are accepted here "except if you are Irish."⁹⁶ This view was not shared by all in the group. Similarly, elsewhere the comment was made that a large section of the Irish Catholic community born in Scotland feels alienated in the country of their birth⁹⁷, but this viewpoint was not widely shared. In one parish in Paisley a case of anti-Irish racism from within the Catholic community was mentioned⁹⁸ and a priest also perceived that the 'upper echelons' of Scottish society can display a degree of anti-Irish snobbery.⁹⁹ Elsewhere in Paisley it was mentioned that a local supermarket had flags flying from all different nations of the world during the last world cup. The only complaints received were about the Irish flag.¹⁰⁰ In Dunkeld in one parish in particular it was felt that a much bigger issue than anti-Irish racism is the way that recent migrants who have come to work in agriculture amongst other things are treated.¹⁰¹ The opinion was also expressed that in rural Stirlingshire anti-English sentiment is heard more than anti-Irish sentiment.¹⁰²

Some consideration was given to the way in which anti-Irish Republican sentiment is conflated with anti-Irish and anti-Catholic sentiment. In a large number of parishes the conflation of being Catholic with being a 'Fenian' was mentioned, 'Fenian' being used to refer to Catholics in a derogatory way and not just those with Republican views.¹⁰³ This included accusations of the police using this language.¹⁰⁴ One professional person told a story which took place a number of years ago. She approached a group of colleagues who were using derogatory language about Catholics. When she expressed her disapproval and added that she was Catholic they expressed surprise because she didn't have a 'Catholic' name. When she explained that her mother was an Italian Catholic whilst her father was Scottish the response was "*oh well, that's ok then, you are not a Fenian.*"¹⁰⁵ An older lady in another parish in Glasgow told a story to illustrate how, for some, being Catholic is still conflated with being Irish. She lives in sheltered housing and when she arrived for tea one day an elderly gentleman insisted that she was Irish. When she protested and said that she was Scottish and her parents had both been Scottish the man wouldn't back down; and she said she knew he was saying this to her because he knew she was Catholic. She felt bad about this and also felt that she had never heard such bigoted attitudes as she does now in the sheltered housing.¹⁰⁶ Elsewhere a participant thought that the troubles in Northern Ireland heightened tensions in Scotland and led to associations between Catholics and the IRA. He said he used to be referred to as a "Birmingham Bomber".¹⁰⁷

⁹⁵ M9

⁹⁶ G8

⁹⁷ G2

⁹⁸ P4

⁹⁹ P2

¹⁰⁰ P8

¹⁰¹ D1; D5

¹⁰² D3

¹⁰³ G5; G8; E1; E4; E5; M2; M9; M10; GW1; GW4

¹⁰⁴ G8

¹⁰⁵ G1

¹⁰⁶ G9

¹⁰⁷ P6

Discussions about whether the experience of Irish Catholics is any different to that of Catholics from other origins did not reach any firm conclusions. In Motherwell the opinion was expressed that Polish, Italian and Spanish Catholics have never been subject to the same antagonism as Irish Catholics,¹⁰⁸ and one Italian Catholic participant said he was aware of not being at the receiving end of sectarian attitudes in the way that Irish Catholics are.¹⁰⁹ In Paisley a non-Catholic teacher in a Catholic school was heard to make comments about Catholics "*not having the same work ethic and Irish Catholics being even worse.*"¹¹⁰ In Dunkeld it was felt that the Polish Catholic experience is likely to be different, not least because they never arrived in the same numbers as the Irish Catholic community and so probably would not be perceived as such a threat.¹¹¹

1.8 Ignorance

Ignorance on both sides as opposed to real hatred was mentioned as the basis of sectarianism in a few instances¹¹². A lack of knowledge about/understanding of others' religion was highlighted which can lead to suspicion and dislike of the "other." Ignorance of historical events was mentioned in particular. With reference to Orange Walks the point was made that the Battle of the Boyne was about political power, not divisions between Catholics and Protestants, William of Orange won battles with the use of Catholic mercenaries and the then Pope was supportive of King William's defeat of King James.¹¹³

1.9 Republican Parades

Republican parades were a key issue in one consultation in Motherwell and were discussed briefly in 5 groups in Glasgow. The Motherwell group were very displeased that a new parade had started up in October 2010, felt they hadn't been properly consulted on this and didn't want it partly because they feared it could lead to heightened tensions within the local community.¹¹⁴ In four consultations the point was made that republican parades are in support of a political cause as opposed to being sectarian, about religion or 'anti-Protestant'.¹¹⁵ A couple of times it was said that both Protestants and Catholics are part of the republican movement and both can take part in marches.¹¹⁶ The policing of republican parades was seen as problematic in one case. Given the perception that there is likely to be trouble at republican parades they are policed by 'special order police', and one young female participant alleged that the police go undercover to video marchers when they should be monitoring those taking part in counter demonstrations.¹¹⁷ On the whole, however, the message across most participants in this exercise was that republican parades are "just as bad as" orange walks and both should receive the same treatment.

¹⁰⁸ M9. It should be pointed out that this point was made by a group of people who considered themselves to be of Irish origin and was not the expressed opinion of those of Polish, Italian or Spanish descent.

¹⁰⁹ A2

¹¹⁰ P8

¹¹¹ D4

¹¹² E2; GW4; G5;P3

¹¹³ E2; GW4; G5

¹¹⁴ M3

¹¹⁵ G5; G6; E7; P2

¹¹⁶ G4; G5

¹¹⁷ G4

PART TWO:

How does the community you live in experience sectarianism? How does it affect you?

Most discussed issues

2.1 Banter or "Jokes with a Jag"

There were differences of opinion both across the diocese and within each diocese on the issue of banter. In Glasgow, Motherwell, Galloway, Dunkeld and Paisley there was considerable discussion about sectarian comments, "wee jokes" or "jokes with a jag" being part of everyday social interaction. Some examples of the kind of banter people referred to are noted here though it should be said that the line between what people considered to be banter and verbal abuse wasn't always clear:

- Jokes about "fag ash" when people display ashes on their forehead as part of Ash Wednesday traditions¹¹⁸ and reference to Ash Wednesday as Tim Foolery day¹¹⁹
- Jokes about nuns and priests, references to "paedos"¹²⁰
- A secondary school teacher being called 'rebel' and 'sniper' every morning when he turns up at school (the same man mentioned hearing "Fuck the Queen" regularly at school)¹²¹
- The use of the word "pape" in various contexts: fish on a Friday in Barlinnie prison being referred to as Pape Steak; someone being referred to as "green grapes"; overhearing others referring to Catholics as "papes"¹²²
- Comments about tattie-munchers, fenians, fenian bastards and "the only good Catholic being a dead Catholic"¹²³

It was felt by some that such jokes often go too far, make people feel uncomfortable and mask deeper prejudices, one person commented that street level banter is not much better now than in the past though what they termed 'officially practised' sectarianism has reduced.¹²⁴

There was also considerable discussion about banter in the workplace and differences of opinion on the extent to which this is acceptable or not, and where the boundaries might be. A comment was that due to legislation people are much more careful now in the workplace context, but in social interaction outside work prejudices become evident.¹²⁵ In another case a legal process was pending as a result of sectarian banter that had gone too far in the workplace.¹²⁶

Another view expressed in a few groups was that banter is not really evil in intent, can be based on ignorance and isn't always meant to be offensive. One man felt strongly that sectarianism needs to be more narrowly defined so that we are all clear what we are talking about. He felt that we are too quick to say attitudes/language/behaviour is sectarian when they aren't really. Or, if they are, they are not serious enough to cause offense.¹²⁷ Another comment was that "*if the other person is insulted you have stepped over the mark, it is not about how you feel.*"¹²⁸

¹¹⁸ G6

¹¹⁹ P8

¹²⁰ G4

¹²¹ G5

¹²² G7

¹²³ G4; E5

¹²⁴ G7

¹²⁵ M9

¹²⁶ GW2

¹²⁷ E2

¹²⁸ P9

Social Consequences Different for Sectarian/Racist 'Banter' or 'Abuse' - In seven consultations opinions were expressed along the lines that it is more acceptable to mock the Catholic faith, beliefs and traditions than it is to mock other faith traditions or beliefs.¹²⁹ One man thought that Irish Catholics come in for particular abuse.¹³⁰ Another young man expanded this further saying that the social consequences are more extreme for racist behaviour than they are for sectarian behaviour.¹³¹ Elsewhere it was felt that the 'acceptable' face of mocking Catholics was borne out in the media.¹³²

Responses to Banter - There was a mixed picture regarding how people respond to banter. Some said they wouldn't take offense at banter and would feel fine batting it off; though another argument was that adopting the attitude of "we are used to it and we can deal with it" allows sectarianism to continue because people feel they have permission to continue making such remarks.¹³³ Others said they would back off and not engage in any discussion or debate. In relation to the workplace there was a comment that if the issue of banter was raised the person doing so would be considered an outcast.¹³⁴ One person said they felt powerless to challenge banter, particularly in their personal life.¹³⁵

A final point on the question of banter is the recognition from some groups that banter is a two-way street. One person commented that one of the things perpetuating sectarianism is that Catholics are as good at giving it out as receiving it.¹³⁶ A few others said that Catholics are willing to play the victim card too easily.¹³⁷

2.2 Sectarianism as insidious, subtle and hidden

In a significant number of consultations reference was made to sectarianism being more covert, insidious and subtle now in comparison to the more open and aggressive form it took in the past.¹³⁸ Some referred to an undercurrent of sectarian attitudes, feelings and behaviour which is difficult to pinpoint and difficult to prove in law, but it is still there.¹³⁹ It was felt that this more covert form of sectarianism is more prevalent in the North and East of the country, with part of the explanation for the difference in the north related to the different make-up of the Catholic population there as mentioned in 1.5 above.¹⁴⁰ In one place the story was told of an event when Catholics came together with other denominations for a joint secular activity. A woman commented on the fact that three Catholic women were sitting together. All three felt uncomfortable with this, one remarked "*It was just an odd statement to make, given there was no relevance, apart from a deeper, historical sectarianism.*"¹⁴¹

Denial of the Issue - Linked to the idea of sectarianism being subtle and hidden is the fact that a number of individuals told us that sectarianism hadn't affected them in their life and then proceeded to tell stories which made it clear that they *had* been affected, but had found coping strategies which they didn't acknowledge themselves. Some examples are:

¹²⁹ G5; G6; M9; M10; D2; E7; GW1

¹³⁰ M9

¹³¹ G5

¹³² D2

¹³³ GW1

¹³⁴ E5

¹³⁵ M9

¹³⁶ GW1

¹³⁷ E2

¹³⁸ E5; E6; E7; D1; M10; G1; G3; G9; GW1; G12

¹³⁹ G1; E5

¹⁴⁰ G1; E5; E6; E7; D1; A2

¹⁴¹ E6

- a lady who insisted she hadn't been affected by sectarianism in her life, but went on to say the only problem she ever had was with her mother-in-law who had never liked her because she was Catholic¹⁴²
- two ladies from different parishes in Dunkeld who said they hadn't been affected by sectarianism but went on to say they had made a deliberate choice to move away from the West coast because they didn't want to bring their children up in such a sectarian atmosphere¹⁴³
- a number of young men who said they weren't affected, but who had found their own ways of batting off sectarian language in the workplace and had taken that on board as just an ordinary part of dealing with life's challenges¹⁴⁴
- parishioners accepting as normal the fact that the parish windows are smashed in nearly every 12th July¹⁴⁵

Dichotomy between the public and the private - In Galloway and Paisley, reference was made to the dichotomy between the public and private.¹⁴⁶ In private people will be willing to show their true feelings in a way which doesn't come out in public. One woman goes into people's homes for work and regularly comes across highly sectarian imagery from posters, pictures and memorabilia. She gave the example of an image of the Vatican going on fire and estimated that in 70% of the homes she goes into there are images which could be considered offensive to both Catholics and Protestants. Her main concern was how this kind of offensive imagery would impact on children.¹⁴⁷ In the same consultation another, rather poetic, contribution expressed that the more subtle form of sectarianism is an expression of it slowly dying out: *Sectarianism is not a hateful or angry thing, but it is there, more subtle, there is still a 'them and us' feeling. We are not generally accepted as equals. We will have to live through the last kick of this. It's like racism in the US - it is powerful in pockets, but you couldn't say it is a racist country. It is less naked, even more subtle, like the dying kick of a wounded animal.*¹⁴⁸

2.3 Workplace Discrimination

In nearly every consultation there were stories of discrimination against Catholics in the workplace context from the past. The shipyards had a special mention as somewhere where there was blatant discrimination. According to those who had worked there Catholics were able to get jobs as platers, welders and plumbers; these were referred to as the "black squad". Further up the chain the 'gaffers' and directors were Protestant and belonged to the Freemasons.¹⁴⁹

Some local businesses were also mentioned, though it was made clear that there were places where both Catholics *and* Protestants knew they needn't bother applying for work since they would be very unlikely to get it. There were also a limited number of stories of what people felt was contemporary discrimination. We were not able to verify these stories, but the individuals involved clearly felt they had a significant impact on their lives. Most of the examples relate to perceived differential/unfair treatment, with a few related to inequality of access to opportunities.

¹⁴² E6

¹⁴³ D3; D4

¹⁴⁴ G1; G5

¹⁴⁵ M7

¹⁴⁶ P5; GW1

¹⁴⁷ GW1

¹⁴⁸ GW1

¹⁴⁹ P6; P8

Differential/unfair treatment:

- A female railway worker who booked a day's holiday for the Pope's 2010 visit to Scotland. The day prior to the visit 5 people in her team went on sick leave, a highly unusual event which meant that she couldn't attend the visit. The next day all 5 came back to work.¹⁵⁰
- a male dockyards worker who said he felt that Catholics were at threat of serious injury in his workplace with heavy equipment being dropped from high heights¹⁵¹
- A female call centre worker who, on challenging racist language used by her line manager to refer to a Celtic player was told "*you can just keep your mouth shut you fenian bastard*". The call centre was going to discipline the line manager only for the racist insult, but she insisted that he should also be reprimanded for the fenian comment and this happened.¹⁵²
- a male lorry driver who experienced 7 years of perceived sectarian abuse which eventually led to a stand-off with his manager before he chose to leave¹⁵³
- A female student nurse who was not allowed a day off for the Pope's visit to Scotland. She believed this was due to the attitude of the nurse in charge of scheduling. She had been given a placement for Holy Week but wanted to change this so that she could attend Catholic services which take place that week. Those in charge of the placement were fine with her shifting dates but when she approached the scheduling nurse this was also refused. She felt her beliefs were not being respected.¹⁵⁴
- two female support workers in a school who were not allowed to attend Catholic services on-site by non-Catholic support-worker management¹⁵⁵
- a male council worker who told of being shown to the 'Catholic' lunch table on his first day¹⁵⁶
- a young female being asked not to wear a crucifix at the travel agents where she works given that it could "*offend those going to Ireland for the marching season*"¹⁵⁷
- a young female being asked to say what school she went to prior to beginning a presentation for a charity when her school had no relevance whatsoever to the presentation¹⁵⁸
- a young male construction worker who said that his boss refused to call him his [Catholic] name, and gave him another one instead¹⁵⁹
- a female who worked in a cafe who told of a regular customer's behavior changing entirely when she wore a crucifix to work one day¹⁶⁰
- A male council worker who experienced an increase in abuse following recent scandals associated with the Catholic Church in Scotland. He eventually took this up with colleagues and made it clear that he didn't come to work to be abused.¹⁶¹
- A female care worker who turned up at a new client's house to be greeted with the comment "*I hope you are not a Catholic.*"¹⁶²

Inequality of access to opportunities:

- A professional male involved in an ongoing legal process against a law enforcement agency due to sectarian banter going too far. He left the post due to the incident.¹⁶³

¹⁵⁰ G1

¹⁵¹ G7

¹⁵² M10

¹⁵³ G8

¹⁵⁴ D2

¹⁵⁵ E7

¹⁵⁶ E4

¹⁵⁷ GW1

¹⁵⁸ GW2

¹⁵⁹ G5

¹⁶⁰ E2

¹⁶¹ P2

¹⁶² D4

- A male owner of a construction firm who said that sectarianism is rife in his industry with the structure being built around nepotism and membership of the Freemasons and the Orange Order which Catholics often chose not to belong to. He believed he definitely had lost out on being awarded contracts due to being a Catholic and has had to navigate his way through these difficulties to build his company.¹⁶⁴
- A male contractor who had extreme difficulties securing a contract for the provision of equipment to a dockyard until he got his local MP involved - he believes this was due to being Catholic.¹⁶⁵
- A male being promoted at a hospital and his boss being livid when he found out that the person he had just promoted was Catholic.¹⁶⁶
- a male contractor who had been told there would be plenty more work available but this changed very quickly when he mentioned doing some work for a Catholic church and it was discovered he was Catholic.¹⁶⁷
- a 62-year old male labourer being asked what school he attended at an interview (with the inference being this was to find out if he was Catholic)¹⁶⁸

Beyond specific examples there was a general impression in a few consultations that membership of the Freemasons has influenced employment and promotion prospects, with a lingering suspicion that this still pertains in the police force and a special mention of car dealerships where Freemasons' handshakes are used regularly.¹⁶⁹ Contrary to this a couple of men said that in their work they had received contracts from known Freemasons.¹⁷⁰ The commonly-held assumption that non-Catholics cannot get promoted positions in Catholic schools was also mentioned in a few consultations as something which fuels resentment.¹⁷¹

In most of the examples of unfair treatment described above the individuals concerned did not raise their concerns with their employers. Whilst a common sentiment was that equal opportunities legislation had made a difference to workplace practices, some still felt that there is a gap between equalities legislation and what happens in reality in the workplace. Sectarian attitudes have not automatically disappeared because of legislation. The man embroiled in the case of legal action felt that people often have a fear of speaking out because they have so much to lose; both their jobs and related pensions.¹⁷² Others expressed a fear of being ostracised if they were to complain, and preferred to keep their heads down and get on with it. Still others were aware of what they thought were sectarian attitudes but had found their own coping strategies and ways of standing up for themselves.¹⁷³

2.4 Impact of Orange Walks

Earlier in this report differences of opinion regarding the significance Catholics still attach to orange walks were described. Some see them as a sign of hatred and triumphalism and something to be feared, others either feel they are more of an inconvenience or are not impacted at all. Not surprisingly, a correlation could be noted between geographical location, the number of walks taking

¹⁶³ GW2

¹⁶⁴ I5

¹⁶⁵ G7

¹⁶⁶ G13

¹⁶⁷ A1

¹⁶⁸ P6

¹⁶⁹ D3; E7; P6; A1

¹⁷⁰ G8; GW1

¹⁷¹ M12 The practice in Catholic schools is that Heads of Guidance and Heads of School will generally always be Catholics but other promoted positions are open to non-Catholics.

¹⁷² GW2

¹⁷³ D4; G1; M10

place and the number of people saying they felt that walks had a negative impact on them. More people said they felt a negative impact in Glasgow and Motherwell than they did in the east and north of the country, and those expressing this view elsewhere would often be referring to impacts they had felt when they had been in the west. However, geographical location was not the only determining factor. Although mentioned rarely in consultations through observation it was noted that class and income play a role in the extent to which people can either escape the effects of orange walks or are affected by them. One woman from Galloway commented on how those who lived in the 'leafy suburbs' did not have the same exposure to walks as those from council estates and could chose to ignore them.¹⁷⁴

Inconvenience versus high impact- In all of the diocese except Aberdeen people mentioned being inconvenienced by orange walks. A common response is to avoid walks and particular well-known 'orange' villages during the marching season. A small minority of people did not feel inconvenienced by walks. In one case we were told that the orange walk does not go through the area but the windows in the church house are smashed nearly every year on the 12th July. This was not considered to cause any great concern within the Catholic community suggesting that the behaviour, and people's acceptance of it, had become normalised.¹⁷⁵ Some felt impacts went far beyond low level inconvenience. In a consultation held in Galloway in May one man commented that they would be "inundated until Christmas". Flags, banners and posters portraying images such as the red hand of Ulster and welcoming bands such as the Apprentice Boys of Derry were seen as a nuisance in this area, particularly for those living adjacent to the Orange Lodge. We were told that these would stay up long after marches had taken place.¹⁷⁶

Routing and Timing - In Glasgow, Motherwell, Paisley, St. Andrews and Edinburgh and Galloway opinions were expressed by some that the routes and timing of orange walks are chosen deliberately to wind up Catholics. One priest said that for a number of years orange walks would be timed to coincide with first communions and they had changed the dates at short notice in order to avoid what he called this "coincidence".¹⁷⁷

Disruption to Health Services - In three consultations disruption to health services was mentioned as a negative impact of orange walks.¹⁷⁸

Secondary Tier Issues

2.5 Ongoing Discrimination/Intolerance Within Communities

We heard a number of stories which appear to demonstrate an underlying suspicion/dislike of the Catholic community and what it represents. This is related to the point about sectarianism being hidden and subtle described in point 2.2 above, and also to the stories of perceived unfair treatment in the workplace under point 2.3. At times this suspicion/dislike was manifest in ongoing discrimination, at other times it would have more subtle undertones. It may relate to a lack of understanding/ignorance or something deeper.

Membership and Position within Sports Clubs - Golf and bowling clubs were mentioned repeatedly as places where Catholics still experience discrimination, both in terms of accessing membership and assuming positions of authority within the clubs.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁴ GW3

¹⁷⁵ M5

¹⁷⁶ GW3

¹⁷⁷ E2

¹⁷⁸ D3; M9; M6

¹⁷⁹ G1; G6; G7; G9; P2; P3; GW2; P6; P7;

The Convert's Experience - In four consultations intolerant attitudes relating to an individual's choice to convert to Catholicism were mentioned. In one case a woman who had belonged to the Episcopalian Church told of being ostracised from her old circle of church friends upon her conversion to Catholicism. This had clearly been a hurtful experience.¹⁸⁰ Another man spoke of his relatives refusing to speak to him when he converted, and in another case a refusal to speak to an entire family when one member chose to convert was recalled.¹⁸¹ A priest also mentioned that he had known a number of cases where the non-Catholic member of a mixed couple expressed an interest to convert to Catholicism but said they wouldn't do so because they feared what their families' reaction would be.¹⁸²

Charitable Giving - A couple of these stories related to a reluctance to donate to what are perceived to be 'Catholic' charities. In one case Celtic Boys club was asked to leave a supermarket due to complaints from other customers,¹⁸³ the other cases referred to charities which are to the benefit of all.¹⁸⁴ In one parish it was said that it is very difficult to get grants for the church hall when it is viewed by others as only Catholic - even when it is used by the wider community.¹⁸⁵

2.6 Perception of Unfair Treatment/Harassment by the Police

In Glasgow, Motherwell and Paisley and in individual interviews a number of cases were mentioned in which people felt that they had been at the receiving end of unfair treatment or harassment by the police.¹⁸⁶ In the main these allegations related to policing of Celtic supporters and policing of orange walks and republican parades. Specific examples include perceived excesses in the policing of a Green Brigade protest march in which the marchers were protesting against treatment by the police;¹⁸⁷ allegations of victimisation of certain individuals associated with organising Celtic support;¹⁸⁸ allegations of police undercover activity during Republican Parades which focus on the marchers and not trouble-makers on the sidelines;¹⁸⁹ allegations of discrimination in the policing of Republican Parades including having routes changed and a perceived disproportionate reaction to the level of threat posed by the marches;¹⁹⁰ allegations of an inadequate police response when there is trouble at Republican Parades including one in Denny in 2012 when serious abuse was shouted at the marchers and in the post-march debriefing the police said everything had gone fine and only arrested one woman. When the marchers subsequently protested at the level of abuse another 6 people were arrested.¹⁹¹

We also heard general accusations of the police turning a blind eye to disturbances which affect the Catholic community. In one consultation the case of the alleged verbal abuse of youngsters making their way to their First Communion along Dumbarton Road in Glasgow was mentioned. According to the participants grown men were shouting verbal abuse at the youngsters and the police stood by and did not take any action.¹⁹² Elsewhere there were allegations of an inconsistent police response when weekly vandalism was taking place at a Catholic church.¹⁹³

¹⁸⁰ E2

¹⁸¹ E7; D2

¹⁸² M7

¹⁸³ G3

¹⁸⁴ P1; E4

¹⁸⁵ P5

¹⁸⁶ G3; G4; G6; G8; M1; M9; P1; I1; I6; I7; I9

¹⁸⁷ P1. The Green Brigade are a group of Celtic supporters

¹⁸⁸ G8

¹⁸⁹ G4

¹⁹⁰ I6

¹⁹¹ I6

¹⁹² G10

¹⁹³ I1

An Institutional Problem? - Whilst we are not able to verify the truthfulness of these allegations they are illustrative of a degree of mistrust of the police from some individuals within the Catholic community. Some see this as part of a broader institutional problem. Reference was made to two further cases to illustrate the institutional problem: firstly, the case of Strathclyde Police officer Tommy McCrindle, part of FoCus (Football Co-ordination Unit for Scotland) who was removed from duties for allegedly posting his job to be 'fume a Pest and Termite control' on Facebook,¹⁹⁴ and secondly the case of two Catholic nuns who were accused then cleared of abuse in an approved school in Renfrewshire.¹⁹⁵ During the trial it emerged that the police officer in charge of investigating the abuse claims had given the phone numbers of alleged victims to other alleged victims and had encouraged them to go to lawyers to seek compensation. She was also caught wearing a "No Surrender" sticker on her uniform at a Rangers game. This behaviour was described by another police officer as 'highly unprofessional'.¹⁹⁶

2.7 Anti-Social Behaviour

In Motherwell, Galloway and Paisley we heard of a few incidences of anti-social behaviour including graffiti and vandalism. A priest in Motherwell discovered that when repair work was being carried out some of the contractors had daubed sectarian graffiti (Fuck the Pope and 1690) onto the inside wall of the church chimney. The culprits were discovered and reprimanded.¹⁹⁷ The windows being smashed in another parish every 12th July has already been mentioned in this report,¹⁹⁸ and elsewhere in the diocese there was a period when the church house was vandalised regularly every weekend. In Galloway the day after Pope Benedict's visit 'No Papacy Here' was daubed onto a church and a few other incidences of graffiti and vandalism related to Catholic churches and schools were recalled.¹⁹⁹ In Paisley a recent example was given of adults being found kicking about a picture of the Pope,²⁰⁰ and elsewhere in the diocese it was said that church windows have been broken when Rangers have lost football games.²⁰¹ Whilst these incidences could be very upsetting to those directly affected at the time, there was not a feeling that they were widespread.

2.8 Fears Around Independence

In four consultations a general fear was expressed that the situation will get worse for Catholics if Scotland votes for independence in 2014, although this view was not always shared by every participant in the group.²⁰² One lady felt that hidden or subtle sectarianism described in 2.2 above could become more overt again. Elsewhere it was felt that the next big debate post-independence will be around faith schools, and Catholic schools could come under threat with this.²⁰³

2.9 Intimidation/Harassment/Violence

We did not hear a lot of stories about serious intimidation/harassment or violence which is why, in spite of their serious nature, this category is not higher in our list.

The case of the man who felt under serious threat in his workplace at a dockyard has already been mentioned.²⁰⁴ Another man told a story of being badly beaten up on the street as a youngster

¹⁹⁴ G6

¹⁹⁵ G10

¹⁹⁶ See 'Nuns Anne Kenny and Agnes Reville cleared of assault' on www.bbc.co.uk accessed on 22.5.2013

¹⁹⁷ M9

¹⁹⁸ M5

¹⁹⁹ GW1; GW3

²⁰⁰ P5

²⁰¹ P7

²⁰² G10; GW2; M10; M9

²⁰³ G10

²⁰⁴ G7

because his blazer identified that he belonged to a Catholic school, and then having a repeat experience forty years later when leaving an event at a golf club where it had become open knowledge that he was Catholic. The more recent experience had brought up feelings which had been buried when he was attacked as a teenager and he spoke of feeling a good deal of fear which had now been transferred onto fear for his children.²⁰⁵ In one consultation alleged threats to journalist Mark Daly made on twitter were mentioned.²⁰⁶

Verbal Abuse - The case of alleged verbal abuse shouted at youngsters making their way along Dumbarton Road in Glasgow has been mentioned above. In another parish there was mention of an attack launched on a priest who was referred to as a paedophile,²⁰⁷ and another case when a priest was verbally abused.²⁰⁸ A young girl who takes part in a Republican Parade said that they get serious abuse shouted at them, alleging that the police don't react if they are attacked.²⁰⁹ An older lady told the story of being on the receiving end of very serious verbal abuse and intimidation when she moved to Larkhall a number of years ago.²¹⁰

Criminal Behaviour - In one consultation a priest who was previously a prison chaplain mentioned that sectarian remarks and behaviour are rife in prisons. He felt this was mindless and dangerous and that prisoners from Northern Ireland have fuelled sectarian sentiment in Scottish prisons.²¹¹ As a result of this input Conforti is carrying out listening exercises in prisons.

²⁰⁵ G2

²⁰⁶ G10, a man appeared in court in December 2012 related to this case. See <http://news.stv.tv/west-central/206307-man-due-in-court-over-threat-to-bbc-scotland-journalist-mark-daly/> accessed 30.8.2013

²⁰⁷ G8

²⁰⁸ G12

²⁰⁹ G4

²¹⁰ I3

²¹¹ GW2

Part Three: Proposals for Addressing Sectarianism

Given the time available in each listening exercise we generally only touched on how to address what had come up during the discussion. Nevertheless the following ideas were mentioned.

3.1 Look inwards - move beyond victimhood

Be confident of who and what we are and why we are Catholic - In St. Andrews and Edinburgh, Motherwell, Galloway, Dunkeld and Paisley a number of people spoke about the need to be confident about who we are as Catholics.²¹² The older generation in particular was mentioned as having a tendency to keep their heads down and stay quiet instead of being open and proud of our faith.²¹³ It was also recognised that as Catholics we can have a somewhat defensive attitude and focus on what we can find to complain about instead of searching for the positive in relationships and experiences.²¹⁴ One way of moving beyond this would be to educate ourselves more about our own beliefs and faith so that we have solid arguments at our finger tips when our faith is criticised. Particular reference was made to the need to get better at presenting the benefits of the Catholic school system in a positive light.²¹⁵

Moving beyond victimhood - Beyond education the need for a change in attitude was also mentioned in St. Andrews and Edinburgh, Motherwell, Galloway and Dunkeld. Catholics should be willing to look at ourselves and our own prejudices and be honest about our own sectarianism.²¹⁶ A young woman told a story to illustrate how we need to be aware of our own reactions. On returning home one evening her neighbour was flying a union jack outside the house. She felt quite annoyed, assuming it was related to Rangers winning a football match but subsequently discovered it was because a soldier had come back from Afghanistan. She then felt bad about her own visceral reaction to the union jack.²¹⁷ Others spoke of the need to enhance our capacity to ride punches, not take offense so easily and move beyond a victim mentality.²¹⁸

Need for positive leadership - A large number of our listening exercises took place in spring 2013, just after revelations about Cardinal O'Brien. In some parishes in Glasgow, Galloway, Dunkeld, Paisley and St. Andrews and Edinburgh participants felt there had been a lack of leadership at this time and more generally.²¹⁹ In Edinburgh the opinion was expressed that the Catholic Church needs to be and be seen to be more compassionate, with the words "we can't be judging others when we all have clay feet".²²⁰ In Glasgow participants in two parishes felt that the leadership within the church should focus more on positive messages on social equality as opposed to a narrower focus on sexual politics.²²¹ In Dunkeld and Glasgow it was felt that there are a great deal of resources within laity of the Catholic community which are not being used.²²² Elsewhere it was mentioned that the Catholic community and organisations need to lead by example.²²³

Improve Catholic Representation in the Media - Related to the above points and already mentioned under 1.3 in a few parishes the need for the Catholic Church to improve its media representation

²¹² E7; E2; GW1; D3; D4; P5

²¹³ GW1

²¹⁴ D4

²¹⁵ P1; E2

²¹⁶ E2; E5; E7; GW2; D3; D4; M12

²¹⁷ GW2

²¹⁸ E5; E7;

²¹⁹ GW4; E5; G1; G7; D3; P3

²²⁰ E5

²²¹ G1; G7

²²² G1; D1; D3

²²³ E3

was mentioned.²²⁴ It was felt that Catholic spokespeople have tended to be defensive and there is a need to move towards positive messages wherever possible.²²⁵

3.2 Education

Education as a solution was mentioned in all the dioceses.²²⁶

Educate adults as well as children and use sustained approach for all - Educating parents and adults as well as children came up in several consultations.²²⁷ However, it was acknowledged that the Catholic Church had been trying to find ways to work in adult education for years, but hasn't quite found an effective way to do it.²²⁸

Address gaps in the school curriculum - In a few places gaps in the school curriculum were mentioned. Teachers mentioned that history is sanitised in schools, and Irish immigration and its effects are not covered.²²⁹ One former teacher said that children were advised to stay away from topics related to Irish history or sectarianism in responses to exam questions because they wouldn't know which side external examiners would be coming from and this could be prejudicial to their results.²³⁰ Although mention was made of Education Scotland providing anti-sectarian material which is used at primary school level, a need was expressed for sectarianism to be addressed directly in the school curriculum at secondary level as well.²³¹ Schools now have forms which have to be completed whenever a racist remark is made. One woman asked if there are also forms for sectarian remarks, and if not, maybe there should be.²³²

Reduce ignorance by creating opportunities for shared activities - The need to move beyond ignorance, educate both sides, increase knowledge and information were mentioned.²³³ In one consultation it was felt that the way Catholics can tend to keep themselves to themselves contributes to sectarianism and opportunities need to be sought for shared activities wherever possible.²³⁴

Bring schools together, share activities - Supporting schools coming together was mentioned in several consultations.²³⁵ Reference was made to a working group looking at interfaith education, with the point made that this should be covered in all schools with children taken into different churches, mosques and synagogues. Consortium arrangements and shared campuses were also mentioned as providing opportunities for further integration.²³⁶ Young people from one school said that they would regularly share the bus with other Catholic schools if they were attending joint activities, but didn't do so with non-denominational schools. They questioned this and thought that could be a way of breaking down barriers.²³⁷

²²⁴ GW4; D3; P3; G7; M10; E6; D1

²²⁵ GW4; D3; P3; G7; E6; D1

²²⁶ G4; G5; G6; G7; G13; E3; E7; GW2; GW3; M2; M9; M11; D3; D4; P3; P5

²²⁷ G5; E7; GW2;

²²⁸ E7

²²⁹ P7; G3

²³⁰ P7

²³¹ P5; D3

²³² D3

²³³ G4; G7; M11

²³⁴ M11

²³⁵ G7; D4; P3; P9

²³⁶ P3

²³⁷ P9

Education starts in the home - Children being brought up to respect others, and instilling in children a sense of their own worth starts in the home was also emphasised.²³⁸ Schools already do a great deal with youngsters, but this is undermined if they get a different message at home. Parents have to assume their own responsibilities and not just leave education to the school.²³⁹

3.3 Ecumenism

In a number of parishes it was said that progress is being made regarding ecumenical relationships and there are increasing signs of public unity.²⁴⁰ Elsewhere it was felt that more could still be done to build on and improve existing relationships.²⁴¹ Concrete ways of doing this were suggested:

- Be open to sharing church spaces. A concrete example was the Larkhall Church of Scotland Minister sharing her church space for Catholic first communions²⁴²
- long-term sharing of church spaces, a concrete example being the Lanthorne centre in Livingston which it was felt had been a very positive experience which contributed to good cross-community relationships²⁴³
- emphasise what faith communities have in common; people from different faith traditions referencing positive contributions from those of other faiths²⁴⁴
- encourage priests and ministers to work together, including those who have a high profile²⁴⁵
- more interfaith services and collaboration building on world day of prayer and other joint celebrations such as public processions at Easter time²⁴⁶ or local gala days/weeks²⁴⁷
- Inviting those of other faith backgrounds to parish celebrations such as big anniversaries²⁴⁸
- joint study groups, exhibitions, an ecumenical choir²⁴⁹

It was felt that shared programmes of events could help to remove the mystery and myths of the 'other,' since a lot of what is believed is based on conjecture, not fact.²⁵⁰

3.4 Promotion of tolerance, respect, understanding

How to promote more tolerance, respect and understanding was discussed in a few parishes.²⁵¹

In Glasgow, Motherwell, Dunkeld and Paisley it was felt that dealing with what were perceived to be the excesses of orange walks was mentioned as one vehicle to do this. Some of the suggestions regarding how to do so have been covered above: allow them, but contain them better; confine walks to public parks; have further dialogue regarding rules for walks, including the idea of not allowing counter parades; show respect for Catholic churches when passing by or re-route away from Catholic churches, and the orange order covering their own policing costs, or a higher proportion of them.²⁵²

²³⁸ GW1; GW2; GW3; M2; M9

²³⁹ GW3

²⁴⁰ M6; P3; P4

²⁴¹ E1; E2; E4; E5; G1; G8; GW3; GW4; D3; M6; P8

²⁴² E1

²⁴³ The Lanthorne centre has been a shared church space between the Catholic community and the Church of Scotland since 1966

²⁴⁴ GW3

²⁴⁵ GW4; D3

²⁴⁶ E4; G11

²⁴⁷ G11

²⁴⁸ P4

²⁴⁹ G11

²⁵⁰ P5

²⁵¹ D4;

²⁵² D1; P1; M1; M10; G4; G5; G10; P5

Elsewhere the opinion was expressed that a lot of what happens in relation to sectarianism happens in order to invite a response and the best thing to do is ignore it.²⁵³ Along similar lines one person expressed a strong opinion that history should be left there and Catholics have to be able to live and let live.²⁵⁴

Regarding a more tolerant workplace one man thought that part of the normal terms and conditions of employment should be not to use sectarian language and 'banter' at work and if this is breached they should be fired. Workplaces should have a similar no tolerance approach to sectarianism as they do to sexual discrimination.²⁵⁵

3.5 Challenge institutional sectarianism

There was discussion about how to address four areas related to the idea of 'institutional sectarianism': the behaviour of the media and police, engaging in politics and legislation.

Challenge negative messages from the media - Improving Catholic representation in the media has already been mentioned under 3.1 above. How to challenge negative messages and encourage the media to set a better example was also mentioned but with no clear strategies regarding how to do this.²⁵⁶

The issue of perceived harassment by the police was dealt with under 2.6. A group of young people said there should be equal treatment by police, but there was no detail of how to promote this.²⁵⁷

Catholic and Christian representation in politics - It was felt that Catholics need to assume more responsibility for the politicians who stand for election. Catholics should put up and support candidates with Christian values.²⁵⁸ Catholics could also be more active in lobbying all politicians on issues which matter to the Catholic community, for example asking for clear positions to be taken on whether or not they support the Catholic school system.²⁵⁹ Elsewhere the opinion was expressed that the Scottish Government should support and encourage ordinary church-going Christians.²⁶⁰

The need for more precise definitions and a warning on legislation - In a few consultations the need for more precise definitions on what constitutes (and what *does not* constitute) both sectarianism and sectarian offense was mentioned, particularly in relation to what are and are not acceptable songs. It was felt in a number of places that legislation is a questionable solution, whether relating to the perceived inadequacies of the offensive behaviour legislation already mentioned under 1.6 or relating to the banning of orange walks.²⁶¹ One person said '*I would hate to think that the Scottish Government would try and legislate against orange walks*',²⁶² another warned against the Catholic community assuming a position of seeking a ban on orange walks, saying that if this were ever granted then there would be a risk that Catholics would have to make concessions elsewhere and more specifically on Catholic schools.²⁶³ A final comment was that we will 'never legislate sectarianism away', and that it needs to be tackled in a different way, at the local level.²⁶⁴

²⁵³ M9

²⁵⁴ GW4

²⁵⁵ P3

²⁵⁶ D4

²⁵⁷ G4

²⁵⁸ E5

²⁵⁹ GW4

²⁶⁰ P1

²⁶¹ GW3; E2

²⁶² E2

²⁶³ E5

²⁶⁴²⁶⁴ P8 It was pointed out in this listening exercise that tackling sectarianism at the local level is a key part of the Scottish Government's current approach to the issue.

Part Four: Conclusion and Emerging Questions and Challenges

It is evident from this report that the Catholic community does not speak with one voice on sectarianism. It both means different things for different people and is experienced in different ways. Some of the most noteworthy findings are:

Orange Walks: Orange walks and their effects are still of considerable concern to some people, especially from Glasgow, Motherwell and Galloway diocese, but for others they are more of an inconvenience and something that people have adapted to, albeit through a strategy of avoidance.

Catholic Schools: Many felt that Catholic schools are an easy target to blame for sectarian attitudes and behaviour but this is unjust. Repeatedly it was pointed out that Catholic schools model tolerance and are well respected for their ethos and value system as demonstrated by the fact that people of all faiths and none make a positive choice to send their children to them.

The Media: The media is perceived as having a particularly negative influence on sectarianism. Social media is where young people believe there to be the biggest problem. Some in the Catholic laity do not feel well represented by public statements made in their name.

The Constitutional Settlement: The constitutional settlement and the fact that Catholics cannot accede to the throne still rankles with many and is seen as being part of a wider institutional problem of anti-Catholicism by some.

Anti-Catholicism: The perception of sectarianism primarily being about anti-Catholicism in Scotland is a topic of debate. Some would still take that view, others believe that things have moved on considerably or believe that both an anti-Christian and secular agenda is more important. Some of the ways it was felt that anti-Catholicism is demonstrated are: differential/unfair treatment in the workplace and inequality of access to opportunities; discrimination in social contexts such as golf and bowling clubs where Catholics are still excluded or cannot assume positions of authority; a reluctance to donate to what are perceived to be Catholic charities; experiences of being rejected by friends/family on conversion to Catholicism; incidences of anti-social behaviour including graffiti and vandalism and a handful of stories about serious intimidation/harassment or violence; accusations made by a small number of individuals of unfair treatment or harassment by the police.

Football/Old Firm: Whilst football and the old firm are seen as contributing to sectarianism, they are of less significance than anticipated.

Banter: Banter and when it is and is not acceptable was the topic of considerable discussion, with a significant minority viewpoint being that it is more acceptable to mock the Catholic faith, beliefs and traditions than it is to mock other faith traditions or beliefs.

Subtle Sectarianism: In a significant number of consultations reference was made to sectarianism being more covert, insidious and subtle now in comparison to the more open and aggressive form it took in the past. Some referred to an undercurrent of sectarian attitudes, feelings and behaviour which is difficult to pinpoint and difficult to prove in law, but it is still there. It was also pointed out that there can be a dichotomy between the public and the private: people will be willing to show their true feelings in private in a way which doesn't come out in public.

Geographical Differences: The general assumption is that problems related to sectarianism are confined to the west coast of Scotland. In our listening exercises we heard that opinion expressed often, with people from elsewhere saying that either it wasn't an issue for them, or that it was nowhere near as big a problem in their area. However, we also heard a significant number of voices saying that sectarianism takes different forms in different parts of the country. In the north and east many felt its manifestations were more covert and subtle.

Anti-Irish Racism: A minority of people believe that term 'anti-Irish racism' would be a better descriptor of the problem in Scotland than 'sectarianism' and that anti-Irish Republican sentiment is conflated with anti-Irish and anti-Catholic sentiment.

Class: Class is part of the picture. If you are of a certain class/have economic resources you can choose to avoid the worst effects of sectarianism.

Unconscious Denial: Although not openly discussed nor acknowledged, there is an unconscious denial from some individuals of how sectarianism affects them; over time they have developed unacknowledged coping strategies.

Victimhood: In consultations in three diocese participants pointed to a victimhood mentality evident amongst some Catholics and argued that we need to move beyond that and be willing to look at ourselves and our own prejudices.

Scottish Independence: In a small number of consultations a fear was expressed that the situation will get worse for Catholics if Scotland votes for Independence in 2014, although this view was not shared by every participant in the groups.

The next phase of our work will be to move to an action planning stage when we support those who wish to take action on identified issues in their own communities.

Broader Challenges and Questions

Emerging from the project are a number of broader questions and challenges:

The broad range of issues associated with sectarianism which have come up for discussion and what parameters, if any, we should put around planned actions? The project is touching on a range of issues which the wider Catholic Church and different commissions within it need to consider at this time. This would include debates around Catholic schooling; the role of Catholic media; the role of the laity and a creeping secular agenda. A difficulty is that so many of the issues raised during discussions bleed into each other. A concrete example heard in the listening exercises would be how Catholics felt more vulnerable, and somewhat more open to sectarian abuse, in the aftermath of the Cardinal O'Brien scandal, not least given the perceived 'overkill' by some regarding media coverage of the issue. Some people thought that this exposed failures within Catholic Church structures; some felt it illustrated the need to make more use of skilled laity, others expressed a view that Catholics feel they lack the tools to defend their faith in a positive way, especially when conversing with those outside any faith community.

If you disagree with the teachings of the Catholic Church then you are anti-Catholic. In a number of places there was a view that if you disagree with the teachings of the Catholic Church then you are anti-Catholic. How differences of opinion can be aired without assumptions being made about what people think about the Catholic faith and Catholic people as a whole could be further explored.

The problem is out there, beyond the doors of the churches. On the whole those who are practicing faith do not see themselves as exhibiting sectarian attitudes, beliefs or behaviour. Whilst there may be a lot of truth in this, there may also be value in delving deeper into our own attitudes and prejudices.

How will the Scottish Government respond? Some in the Catholic community have felt let down by the Scottish Government in relation to consultation around same sex marriage and decision-making

on joint campus schools. There is therefore some unease about how the Scottish Government will respond to the findings of this project.

As mentioned in the introduction, Conforti's project has been part of a much wider programme to tackle sectarianism in Scotland promoted and funded by the Scottish Government. An independent Advisory Group was established in August 2012 in order to provide Scottish Ministers with impartial advice on developing work to tackle sectarianism. This group, which will run until March 2015, published its first report in November 2014.²⁶⁵ The report includes recommendations on a number of the areas identified in this report for possible action including Education; Marches and Parades; the Media; the Workplace; Football; Legislation and Policing. It also includes a specific recommendation for the leaders of the Christian communities in Scotland to prioritise inter-church relationships at an institutional level to include a focus on sectarianism, perceptions of religious disadvantage and to build mutual understanding.

Having completed listening exercises with parishioners from 57 parishes and 11 groups our feeling is that both bottom-up and top-down approaches to improving mutual understanding are necessary. Conforti is starting to do this through supporting local groups in reaching out to other faith groups in their local area and through co-facilitating cross community dialogue with other faith-based organisations, building on what we have heard by listening mainly to the Catholic community in the first instance.

Our project cannot hope to touch on or resolve all of the questions and challenges which have emerged. However, some doors have been opened and we will seek to implement what Pope Francis reminds us: "***True openness involves remaining steadfast in one's deepest convictions, clear and joyful in one's own identity, while at the same time being "open to understanding those of the other party" and "knowing that dialogue can enrich each side"***".²⁶⁶

²⁶⁵ The report is available from on <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2013/12/6197> accessed 1.4.2014

²⁶⁶ Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium - The Joy of the Gospel*, Catholic Truth Society, 2013: 251

ANNEX 1: PARISHES AND OTHER GROUPS PARTICIPATING IN LISTENING EXERCISES

MOTHERWELL DIOCESE

Parishes

St David's	Plains
St Dominic's	Craigend
St Mary's	Caldercruix
St Kevin's	Bargeddie
St Patricks (2 sessions)	Coatbridge
St Monica's	Coatbridge
St Bride's	Cambuslang

Groups

Conforti Supporter Groups	
Trinity High School Pupils	Cambuslang
Youth Group	Baillieston

GLASGOW DIOCESE

Parishes

St Alphonsus	Glasgow
Immaculate Conception	Maryhill
St Roch's	Glasgow
St Eunan's	Clydebank
Our Lady & St Mark's	Alexandria
St Flannan's	Kirkintilloch
St Margaret Mary's	Castlemilk

Groups

Low Moss Prison	
St. Margaret's Youth Group	
Celtic Supporter's Group	
Oneir Group	
St Roch's Hugh School Pupils	Glasgow
St Roch's High School Teachers	Glasgow

ST ANDREWS & EDINBURGH DIOCESE

Parishes

St Francis Xavier	Falkirk
St. Patrick's	Kilsyth
St. Phillip's	Livingston
St. Mary's Cathedral	Edinburgh
St James	St. Andrew's
St Paul's	Glenrothes
St Mary's	Glenrothes
St Joseph's	Burntisland
St Ninian's	Bonhill
Chapel Royal	Falkland
Our Lady of Lourdes	Dunfermline
St Margaret's	Dunfermline

St John's
St Columba's
Holy Name
St Peter in Chains

Groups

Edinburgh University Catholic Youth Group

Rosyth
Rosyth
Oakley
Dalgetty Bay

Edinburgh

DUNKELD DIOCESE

St Stephen's
St Bernadette's
St John Vianney's
St Fillan's
St Bride's

Groups

Dundee University Catholic Youth Group

Blairgowrie
Tullibody
Alva
Crieff
Monifieth

Dundee

PAISLEY DIOCESE

St John's
St Margaret's
St Charles'
St Paul's
St Conval's
St John the Baptist
Our Lady of Lourdes
St Mirin's
St Laurence's

Barrhead
Johnstone
Paisley
Foxbar
Linwood
Port Glasgow
Bishopton
Paisley
Greenock

GALLOWAY DIOCESE

St Peter in Chains
St Bride's
St Winin's
St. Matthew's
St. Michael's
St. Joseph's

Ardrossan
West Kilbride
Kilwinning
Kilmarnock
Kilmarnock
Kilmarnock

ABERDEEN DIOCESE

St Mary's
St Ninian's
St Columba's
St Mary's
Our Lady of Aberdeen
Holy Family
St Joseph's

Inverness
Inverness
Culloden
Beauly
Kincorth
Mastrick
Woodside

