



This is a transcription of Bishop Sarah's comments to the General Synod following the vote on the motion about Living in Love and Faith.

Thank you Chair. Synod, can I first begin by thanking Geoffrey for his excellent chairing of our debate. Your chairing has been grace-filled, light-touched and enabled us to understand what we have been doing. Thank you.

I am mindful of the cost of this debate on all of us, and I want to thank all of you who have spoken so powerfully and with such dignity. Synod has now reached an outcome. I recognise that there are those who are deeply thankful for this, and there are those who are hurting. The House and the College of Bishops will now begin the various tasks set before us. As we do this, we will continue to be mindful of the deep divisions that continue to exist within our church.

And of course, these divisions on these questions go to the heart of our human identity. We have promised to listen carefully to this Synod. Over the next few months we will reflect on everything which has been said as we go to our task.

And I hope that you will judge whether we have heard when we come back to Synod in July. Chief among these concerns will be how we continue to guard the conscience of those for whom these proposals go too far.

I and the Archbishops hope that today's thoughtful, prayerful debate marks a new beginning for the church, as we seek to go forward, listening to each other; and most of all to God.

I hope now that members will remain in this chamber to pray together now, bringing all that we are holding and feeling the grace and love of God in Jesus Christ. Let us Pray.

Lord God, you have taught us that anything we do without love is worth nothing. For whoever lives without love is counted as dead before you. Send your Holy Spirit and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of love. The true bond of peace and of all virtues. Grant this for the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, who is alive with you and the Holy Spirit. One God, Now and Forever. Amen.

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