

At the **PARISH MEETING** on Monday night, the three dozen or so people who attended gathered round six tables and were given four questions. They discussed each in turn and then recorded their answers.

They then met in workshops.

Here are the four questions and the answers and the notes from the workshops in the hope that they will provoke not only further discussion, but might prompt individuals or groups of people to offer their services to develop different aspects of parish life and involvement.

N.B. The presence of an idea here does not mean that it was a majority opinion or adopted as parish policy.

1. What do you like about St. Joseph's Parish?

What's good about it?

The church building – the statues, Stations of the Cross, decoration, the altar, the cleanliness.

The church is peaceful.

The parishioners.

Good acoustics.

Sense of community among the different generations of parishioners.

Nice priest.

Liturgy.

Music.

Welcoming powerpoint.

The welcoming website.

Family atmosphere.

Convenient – on a bus route

Good organist.

Informative newsletters.

The repository shop.

Sermons – thought provoking.

Inclusive.

Good bacon butties.

Always something going on.

Growing sense of community.

Range of ages of helpers.

Continuity.

Friendly.

Good leadership.

Increasing numbers of people getting involved.

Increase in activities which encourage socialising.

2. How could you improve the good points?

Be more welcoming to outsiders.

More links with schools, primary and secondary.

Enlarge the community.

Something before or after the Saturday Vigil Mass.

Occasional themed masses eg. family, lonely etc.

Shorter homilies – more thought provoking – without the heavy guilt-ridden lecture.

Soft reflective music. Less at Communion.

More uplifting music.

Less sung prayers which limit participation.

Powerpoint more regularly updated and shorter and needs to cover more of parish life.

More family events in the Parish Hall.

Have a choir.

Church warmer in winter.

Better Sunday Mass times.

More weekday evening Masses.

More scope for children to be involved after being on the Sacramental Programme.

Pray for guidance.

Pay more attention to current affairs and social issues. – This may be attractive to and involve teenagers.

Can we make it into the 21st century?

Make GOD = GOOD

3. What else could happen in St. Joseph's Parish which is either not already happening or doesn't seem to have been developed as well as it might have been?

Candle-lit midnight Mass without electric lights.

Special intention Masses eg. healing Masses

Support for family and married couples.

Youth Masses – not just for the uniformed organisations.

Bar.

Appeal to people present at Saturday Vigil and Sunday Masses to become more involved by educating on the role of St. Joseph's in the community.

Links with schools.

Support for engaged couples.

Support for the bereft and lonely/single people.

Sunday school.

Parish register.

Parishioners could pay for or arrange church flowers for anniversaries or in memory of others.

More connection with schools – choir?
Parish choir.
More social activities – mid week.
Encourage those who live alone to join in.
Luncheon clubs.
Soup and sandwich lunches.

4. What steps could be taken to make these things happen?

Parish register – to include all who wish to be considered as being in the parish.
Team of welcomers – to befriend people who ask for Baptism for babies, people who are getting married and will live in the parish.
Invite secondary school children to do voluntary work in the community (clean up the cemetery).
Make people feel valued.
Parish members to explore being involved with children through schools eg. Harvest, Christmas.
Inventory of what is happening and contacts of organisers.

Treasurer: Secretary: Schools/Sacramental Programme liaison: Plant and administration manager: Publicity officer.
Use more Eucharistic Ministers in Eucharistic Services.
More committees with areas of responsibility.
Appeal during Mass for help.
Link with Youth Justice Team.
Premises committee to repair, improve and oversee property.
Targets for fund raising. What is it for and how is it spent?
Open membership groups to support different needs in parishioners.
Practical (ie. not abstract) questionnaire to parishioners about what they want.
Family Mass later on Sunday morning.
More children in the liturgy. More meaningful and lighter.
Groups such as SVP, Knights etc. to speak about their work at Mass and recruit.

WORKSHOPS

ADMINISTRATION

After establishing what is happening in the parish, someone from each activity or club to feed back (all in one evening) a short idea of where we are now as a parish. Then how we can improve and expand activities.
Communication is so important and should be improved.
Reach out to children and youth – the parish's future.

FUND RAISING

Repeat charity shop and parish meals.
Race Night.
Quiz Night.
Whist/ Domino/Darts drives.
Musical Evenings
Carol Concert – Darwen Choirs.
Flower Arrangement
Demonstration
Raffles
Sponsored walks or events.
Refurbish parish hall to make it more attractive for said activities.

SOCIAL EVENTS

Bereft Group – support for the bereaved.
Ladies/ Mens/ Youth/ Young Parents Groups
Non-fundraising activities.
Sports Clubs (to encourage youth/children) using trained volunteers in hall.
Theatre and shopping trips.
Parish trip to Lourdes etc.
Churches Together events.
Speakers, guest events.

LITURGY

Already have Bible reading, Children's Liturgy.
Neighbourhood mass in the home.
Family involvement delivering the liturgy.
Sung Mass
A Latin Mass twice a year.
More uplifting music.

MAINTAINANCE

sort out drainage outside door of hall.

find in the parish someone who can give time freely or fund it.
Same for plastering in hall before painting.
200 club is a maintenance fund therefore we can look to increase to 300 and use this money.
Repointing entrance where repository is.
Give parish hall a clean up and paint the hall.
Raise funds for new toilets.
Clean up outside and put pots, flowers.
Reseal/resurface car park.
Use shed for car parking or remove it.
Need a cigarette bin outside.
Entrance hall smells musty.
Drains?
Remove or replace carpets.
Get primary school and scouts and brownies to paint their own pictures in hallway to induce locals/parents. Will make the place unique and friendly and welcoming.