

PARISH SYNODAL MEETING FRIDAY 21ST JANUARY 2022

Reflecting on your experience of the pandemic, have you experienced a journeying together as a parish family?

- It very difficult time, found it very lonely.
- Missed the parish activities. Did use on-line for mass. It was good to have but missed the Church , the priests and the people of the parish.
- People were delighted to get back in the church.
- It was good to see more people getting back to church.
- I missed being able to go to church and receive holy communion.

What strengths did I find in my faith and faith community?

- My faith helped me through the pandemic, with the belief that this will pass. Gained great strength through prayer
- My faith helped me cope through the pandemic.
- My faith became stronger during the pandemic and helped me a lot.
- Faith was build on my mother's encouragement to me to attend mass. This is something that has grown from there and I have chosen to keep and grow.
- Admiration for the Vietnamese community who come out in large numbers to attend the mass in our Parish. What is it they have and experience that our families do not? Particularly the age group that is involved and is missing from our own parish community- at church.
- Perhaps the Vietnamese people have had to fight to have their faith in their country and we have become complacent with our faith and let it drift.
- After the loss of my husband during the pandemic, I missed the contact with the parish community.
- On the return of the attendance at mass – it was good to see people again, who would attend when they could during the week.
- Opportunity to attend the exposition of the blessed sacrament in the church was great comfort and experience during the pandemic.

Does your Parish family ‘journey’ with others, including those Catholics who no longer participate in your community, those who are not Catholic, and those experiencing poverty, hardship or exclusion?

- The use of on-line and facebook is increasingly important to reach people who are unable to leave their home
- Some people like and are now accustomed to on-line and will use it more now. For those who no longer participate it is the main way by which we can communicate – it has a powerful reach (Facebook and on-line). This is particularly so with young people and children.
- How do we encourage people to attend church and participate.
- The community has changed from what it was, when we were young. Everyone knew each other and we all shared a common faith. This gave us strength. The church and the schools were centres of life with our homes.
- The church had many sodalities and activities that we could attend.
- Today , our community has so many new people – we no longer know our neighbour and do not communicate with them
- People do not converse and communicate with each other the way they used to and don’t want to engage.

How do we foster participation in our parishes journey of faith?

- Internet and on line is more important, particularly young people

How can we support families whose children leave the faith after the celebration of the Sacraments?

- I try to encourage the family to return to the church, after the pandemic but it has been difficult. It is difficult to get children to come back. Mass is too long for them, can we make mass shorter for them?
- Even trying to engage children to do small things was difficult.
- How do we get the children back?
- Post confirmation, they tend not to come back to church, but the basis for them to return is there for them when they realise or are ready
- Post confirmation- if there is not a parent who is active in the sacraments then the support for the children is not there or is weak and they are likely to leave the faith.
- If the parents hold onto their faith then there is a chance that the children will hold theirs.
- There is peer pressure and influences on children that makes it difficult for children to hold onto their faith and develop it.
- Admiration for our Sri Lankan and Vietnamese communities and their devotion to the sacraments.
- People, in general, do not go to confession like they used to and do not see the value in it. Have we lost the notion of sin?

How do we support couples to build Marriages on Jesus Christ?

- In general, People do not value marriage today and they have a new set of rules in their relationships.
- There are new norms in society and these have redefined marriage.
- A marriage built on Jesus Christ is no longer a norm.
- Catholics are now married to people of different denomination, faith or none and it is different from the past.

FURTHER MEETINGS WILL TAKE PLACE ON FIVE FRIDAYS DURING LENT AFTER THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS WHICH WILL TAKE PLACE AT 6.30PM FOLLOWED BY MEETING IN HALL. WHY NOT MAKE THIS YOUR LENTEN PROGRAMME FOR THIS SYNODAL YEAR 2022.