

2022 Synod

St Mary's and St Patrick's Parish Report and Outline Action Plan

Introduction

- ▶ Online questionnaire was used to maximise the number of respondents that could be reached during the pandemic across the 2 parishes.
- ▶ Approx 100 responses received across the 2 parishes, some were from family groups. So we estimate the views of 120 people were gathered. Far more than would have been possible using live groups of 5 or 6 people (recommended meeting size).
- ▶ A detailed online report (including all responses received) was submitted to the Diocese.
- ▶ The later Diocesan and UK Bishops conference reports were remarkably similar to the inputs we gathered.

Aim

- ▶ The aims of this document are to:
 - ▶ Provide a condensed report to the parishioners:
 - ▶ For information,
 - ▶ To continue the dialogue,
 - ▶ To develop a plan to move the parishes forward
- ▶ The more detailed diocesan and bishops conference reports are available online at:
 - ▶ <https://cliftondiocese.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Synodal-response-booklet.pdf>
 - ▶ <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2022/06/synod-national-synthesis-england-wales.pdf>

General Observation

- ▶ An overload of change as a result of:
 - ▶ Change of Parish Priest
 - ▶ Covid Pandemic
 - ▶ Communion between St Patricks and St Marys
 - ▶ Influx of new parishioners
- ▶ Different opinions/perspectives between:
 - ▶ Long term members of the Parishes,
 - ▶ Long term members who have stopped attending, and
 - ▶ Newcomers

Conclusion

Need to strengthen the Parish Community.

How? This needs to be a priority aim of the plan.

Building Community

Main themes from the Parish Responses

The Parish Needs to Do More

- ▶ Things other than Mass, both
 - ▶ Spiritual, and
 - ▶ Social

Evangelising, Outreach, Charity Work, Charity Fundraising

But respondents were generally time poor (family, age, health) and unable to do more themselves!

Community

- ▶ Our parish organisations and ministries do not reflect the diversity of our parish members;
- ▶ We need to do more to ensure that we consider the needs and desires of those different groups: e.g.
 - ▶ Children and Young People
 - ▶ Different ethnic groups
 - ▶ LBGT+
 - ▶ Elderly
 - ▶ Disabled
 - ▶ Housebound
 - ▶ Single people

Communication

Several respondents felt isolated during lockdown

- Observations
 - ▶ We do not have an up to date, effective list of parishioners
 - ▶ Several people know individuals who might have needed support but no centralised records
 - ▶ Parish Website/Online Bulletin has developed a lot over this time but many are not internet users
- Requirement
 - ▶ Blend of communication:
 - ▶ Bulletin/website,
 - ▶ Email,
 - ▶ Facebook,
 - ▶ Hard copy
 - ▶ Phone calls,
 - ▶ Visits
 - ▶ A parish version of a “Customer Relations Management” System
 - ▶ A new, more modern and GDPR compliant Parish Register.
 - ▶ Needs to tie in with Parish Pastoral Care Groups and Improved Communication

Catechesis and Liturgy

Mixed responses in equal numbers (“Marmite!”)

- ▶ General desire to do more in addition to Mass:
 - ▶ Prayer groups,
 - ▶ Bible study,
 - ▶ Education/Catechesis
 - ▶ Adoration & Seasonal Devotions
- ▶ Recognition of need for laity involvement to achieve this but the majority of comments referred to “lack of time”.
- ▶ Mixed (minority) comments about the style of Mass
 - ▶ Sung Mass is a dividing issue (Said Mass is offered during the week, Sung Mass on Sundays)
 - ▶ Some comments that Mass is difficult to understand by newcomers/visitors
 - ▶ Continued catechesis is available for those who desire it...RCIA?
 - ▶ Frequency and timing of masses is an issue for some.

Social Events

Many suggestions for the need for social events to:

- ▶ Build Community
- ▶ Attract members
- ▶ For example
 - ▶ Quizzes,
 - ▶ Films,
 - ▶ Meals (out and in the Hall)
 - ▶ Barbecue,
 - ▶ Charity fund raisers
- ▶ But this has to be interpreted together with common comments that respondents were time poor and unable to input more to arrange events.

Decision Making

- ▶ Majority view that people have little or no input into decision making
- ▶ Minority view that some are involved in decision making
- ▶ Role of PPC is not widely understood
- ▶ Members of PPC are not known by many
- ▶ No clear means of communication to the PPC
- ▶ Some regret that there were no public meetings during the Synod process.

Actions - 1

- ▶ A public meeting of all parish members, both as part of the synod process and as an annual “parish in council” event.
- ▶ Communication campaign on role of PPC, its members, and how to communicate with them (? an online/physical suggestion box)
- ▶ PPC to concentrate more on pastoral matters, less on admin, finance, safety etc. Non pastoral matters considered outside PPC and reported to PPC.
- ▶ Increased financial communication as part of our communication strategy. (Note this is a legal (canon and charity) requirement, not just about fundraising). Encourage comments on the budget and what we spend our money on.
- ▶ A new Parish Register (Using ChurchSuite, see later slide)
 - ▶ Live, responsive, accurate and GDPR compliant
 - ▶ Must tie in with Pastoral Care (who needs what support, what was last contact etc.)
 - ▶ Linked to a new communication strategy
- ▶ Adopt “mixed communication” – hardcopy, website, email, Facebook, letter, personal visits, phone calls (see later slide)

Actions -2

- A campaign to attract volunteers, other than PPC
- Determine way ahead for prayer groups, bible study, personal devotion, opening up the church outside Mass times.
- Determine how to Improve evangelism and outreach (PPC led, involves everyone)
- A social/religious events calendar - regular events that are in the diary a long time ahead. Will enable gathering of volunteers rather than relying on the same committee members all the time.
- Enhanced hospitality after Mass to get more in (weekly or monthly)
- A parish charity fundraising project, for outreach and community building
- Welcoming ministry, both on entry to Mass and on departure.

Communication Strategy

▶ Understand our current communication

- ▶ Designed around hard copy bulletin,
- ▶ Duplication between channels
- ▶ Website contains bulletin and also duplicates the bulletin
- ▶ Weekly change but
 - ▶ One way, "pull" only – Little is "pushed" out to recipients
 - ▶ No subscription
- ▶ Large (> A4) online documents are difficult to read
 - ▶ Mobile Device Screen Sizes
 - ▶ Attention span
 - ▶ Column focus
- ▶ One way only

▶ Modern strategies

- ▶ Heavy focus on email
- ▶ Many small chunks rather than large documents
- ▶ Targeted to smaller groups
- ▶ Two way

▶ Pastoral care communication (to individuals) needs more thought

- ▶ Phone calls, visits, letters, cards

▶ Channels

- ▶ Currently used
 - ▶ Bulletin (hard copy)
 - ▶ Website
 - ▶ Facebook
- ▶ Available for Use
 - ▶ Email
 - ▶ Other Social Media ?

▶ What needs to be communicated?

- ▶ Liturgical calendar
- ▶ Mass readings/responses
- ▶ News
- ▶ Events/Calendar
- ▶ Notices
- ▶ Urgent Notices (e.g. mass cancelation)
- ▶ Appeals
- ▶ Reports (e.g. PPC, Finance)
- ▶ Pastoral support (to individuals)

Parish Register - ChurchSuite

▶ Problems (current registers)

- ▶ Out of Date
- ▶ Not updated
- ▶ Inaccurate (from handwritten inputs)
- ▶ Distributed, held by individuals
- ▶ Stored on personal computers
- ▶ Not GDPR compliant
- ▶ Not used.

Not Fit For Purpose

▶ ChurchSuite

- ▶ GDPR compliant
- ▶ A church management software package
- ▶ Provides “Customer Relations Management” type capability for a church environment.
 - ▶ Can be used for pastoral care records.
- ▶ Modular design based around a register of members, we pay for what we use, currently only address book and rotas.
- ▶ UK based (important for GDPR compliance)
- ▶ Includes email campaign capability - linked to recorded communication preferences.
- ▶ Cloud based (secure, in UK)
- ▶ Can allow individuals to log on and amend their own data
- ▶ Embedded in parish website for data capture.
- ▶ Manages ministry rotas and communicates those rotas and reminders.
- ▶ Enables targeted communications