

St. Patrick's Parish, Mayobridge, PPC

Feedback on Parish Questionnaire

For the purposes of informing the next 5-Year Parish Pastoral Plan, Mayobridge Parish Pastoral Council set out to identify the needs of the parish, as perceived by the parishioners. The PPC felt that one way to gather the thoughts of parishioners was via a survey process. It was subsequently agreed that a questionnaire should be drawn up and made available to parishioners in a number of ways: at weekend Masses over a specified weekend; via the Parish Office and on the Parish website. It was decided that it should also be possible to request the form by contacting the PPC email, published weekly in the Parish Bulletin.

After research and discussion, it was agreed by the Parish Pastoral Council that the questionnaire should consist of three questions, along with a box for further comments. The three questions agreed were as follows:

- 1. What do you think we, who gather as the children of God, do well in our Parish?**
- 2. The way of Jesus is one of openness and acceptance. What do you think we, together as a parish community, could strive to do more effectively?**
- 3. What new initiatives do you think the Holy Spirit is encouraging us together, as a community of faith, to introduce to make Mayobridge a vibrant parish into the future?**

The PPC viewed the information-gathering endeavour as a three-week process. It was decided that the process would be preceded by a brief introductory notice in the bulletin on 6-7 October, informing parishioners that a questionnaire was to be introduced into the parish, with further information to be forthcoming over the succeeding weeks.

It was agreed that Week One of the process (13-14 October) would entail Fr. Desmond Mooney, at both weekend Masses, explaining the purpose and the nature of the information-gathering process, as well as extending a strong and open invitation to all parishioners to participate in the questionnaire, stressing the importance of the involvement of all.

For the following weekend (19-20 October), Week Two of the process, it was decided that the three questions would be published on the front page of the Parish Bulletin and that they would also be made available

on the Parish Facebook page. The timing of the process was chosen specifically to incorporate Mission Sunday as the lynchpin of the three-week cycle, when all parishioners would be asked to reflect on their own role/mission within the parish and the wider Church.

For Mission Sunday, all those already involved in active ministry were to be invited to set up an information stall in the Parochial Hall to promote their particular ministry. It was agreed that the questionnaire would be made available at the PPC stall for those who wished to avail of it early.

The final week of the information-gathering process was to take place on 26-27 October. At both weekend Masses, the PPC would make the questionnaire available to parishioners who would then be provided with the personal space and time to respond to the questions set, during what would normally be the 'homily' time. Members of the PPC would be available to assist any parishioner(s) with queries. Questionnaires, which could remain anonymous if so wished, would then be collected up immediately after completion and stored in a secure location within the Church to ensure that confidentiality was respected.

Following on from this, a notice was placed in the bulletin on 2-3 November, advising any parishioners who had missed the opportunity to submit their comments, that a form was available in the Parish Office or via the PPC email account.

Conclusions

Immediate Action

In relation to involving youth, programmes are already up and running, namely the Glas Og Programme, John Paul II Awards and the GIFT programme. Over twenty young people participated in the aforementioned programmes and have contributed to the liturgy of the Mass. Through raising awareness of the programmes and by making volunteer forms available online, at the back of the church and from the parish office, this active ministry and opportunity for involvement will be open to all young members of the parish.

A Mass to recognise all babies baptised over the previous twelve months was initiated on Sunday 12th January 2020. This will be an annual occurrence on the feast of the Baptism of Our Lord.

A Lectio Divina prayer group has been running in the parish for a number of years in the Convent on Monday evenings from 7.30-8.30pm. In addition to being announced at Mass and promoted in the Parish Bulletin and on Facebook, it will be publicised via the parish website and on the noticeboard at the back of the Church.

At present, parish ceremonies and events are advertised in the parish bulletin. In addition to this, an online calendar is being made available via the parish website. It will also be displayed on the noticeboard at the back of the church.

The Blessing of Pets, which commenced on 4th October 2019, will become an annual event. Following on from the Dawn Service on Easter Sunday morning, 2019, it is proposed that a Walk into Light be held during Lent this year. It is also proposed that Mayobridge Parish will continue to liaise with Warrenpoint Parish to offer further prayer walks.

Discussions are underway with the Women's Group regarding the setting up of a community forum.

An invitation to meet will be extended by Mayobridge PPC to Burren PPC with a view to discussing shared interests.

Contact with the Finance Committee will be made regarding the request for further information on finances, the collectors' rota, use of the Convent premises and the Parochial Hall, fundraising, support for Kalobeiyei and a new roof for the Church.

An Eco-Awareness Certificate was awarded to the parish in December 2019. Promotion of directives from Pope Francis in Laudato Si will continue, as will the celebration of the Season of Creation in September-October each year.

Short-term Actions

To encourage wider involvement of parishioners, a Volunteer Form will be made available at the back of the church, via the website and from the parish office for those who wish to become more actively involved in any aspect of parish life. Opportunities for training, where relevant, and mandatory Safeguarding Awareness will be provided.

The current arrangements for the distribution of the Eucharist at Mass will be reviewed and discussed by the PPC.

Distribution of the Eucharist to the sick and elderly by lay Eucharistic Ministers will be initiated following the completion of the relevant diocesan safeguarding workshop by those who volunteer for this role. A notice will be placed in the bulletin and announced at Mass inviting the sick or elderly to forward their name and contact details to the parish office, via telephone or email, or by placing these details in the collection basket.

With regard to the setting up of a Funeral Ministry, discussion will be initiated to agree the necessary protocols, procedures and guidelines. Following on from this, training and mandatory Safeguarding Awareness will be provided.

Volunteers with social media competence will be sought to explore ways of promoting parish events to a wider audience.

Long-term Actions

Opportunities to extend current youth ministry programmes in the parish to incorporate the setting up of a Youth PPC will be investigated.

It is proposed that an invitation be extended to all parishioners to attend an open meeting with the Parish Priest and PPC, for which the agenda would be published in advance.

The PPC proposes to liaise with the Women's Group to plan and implement a Mission of Belonging whereby qualified speakers will be invited to help convey the message that our Church extends a welcome to all and is open to everyone.

Efforts will be made to identify Champions/Parish Ambassadors to initiate outreach and to publicise opportunities for involvement to non-Mass goers. In conjunction with Burren PPC, it is proposed that an Alpha course be provided within the parish.

Following on from the acquisition of a projector and screen for the Parochial Hall by the Women's Group, a series of talks on topical issues,

to include mental health and drugs' awareness, etc. will be made available to parishioners.

The possibility of hosting Missions, Youth Missions and concerts as well as the associated costs will be explored.

Faith talks will be offered to those interested in broadening their understanding of the Catholic faith.

Other Responses

It was not possible to explore provision of transport to assist the elderly in getting to Mass due to current Insurance and Safeguarding Guidelines.

Since the Parish Priest has responsibility for more than one parish, it is not feasible or practical for him to welcome people at the church door. Although the priest generally reads the notice, on occasion a lay person takes on this role to alleviate the pressure on the priest.

Directives from Pope Francis are already referenced in the bulletin on an ongoing basis. The possibility of setting up a link via the Parish Facebook page to Pope Francis' directives is being investigated.

A Pioneer Group has been up and running in the Parish for a number of years.

Refreshments were offered after Mass, as a pilot, over the weekend of the Mission Sunday celebrations, but unfortunately there was scant uptake.

It is possible for bereaved families, should they wish, to make contact with the Parish Office to request the recording of Funeral Masses.

Further to the request made, Mass leaflets can be taken home and used for personal prayer.

The Junior Choir are located at the front of the Church. The Senior Choir are located in the Gallery so that this space is utilised. Following on from requests, anyone who wishes to volunteer to lead the rosary on Sunday morning can volunteer by completing the Volunteer Form made available at the back of the Church.

Mindful of the needs of the sick and elderly, as well as an aging clergy, the Mass on St. Anne's Day is celebrated in the Church rather than outdoors in the Convent grounds. The Shrine, Convent and grounds are open to the public for the duration of the feast day.

Mayobridge Parish Pastoral Council wish to thank everyone who took the time to complete the questionnaire. With the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we look forward to working together to develop a sustainable, vibrant, active and caring faith community in Mayobridge.