**JOURNEY WITH RESPECT**

Underpinning questions - Our faith is personal yet not private. How can we bring back community/family feel?

Why do people want to belong to our community?

Where do you meet people in need inside or outside our parish?

What is need? – physical, spiritual, emotional?

How do we make connection with people looking for friendship? The young. Neighbours isolated from one another.

What can be done to help or show, explain to parents things they should be doing to help their children with talents or gifts that need maturing?

How can we help parents be good parents?

What can we offer people to draw them back to Church?

Church is the fertile ground where initial conversations take place.

Church on Sunday is a tangible being the journey happens naturally.

Church equals belonging and belief.

Provide opportunities that are not exclusive to Mass; for example monthly breakfasts, Side by Side mentoring through the school.

Mending broken relationships with Mass, a starting point is building bridges.

Build on activities around the church which in turn will enable the spiritual journey to gather momentum.

There is sometimes a fear of being perceived as pushing your own religious beliefs on others if you talk about it too much – eg at work.

We need to be actively looking and listening for those moments when people reveal (quietly) their talents.

In recognising gifts, we also have to acknowledge that people can feel they’ve reached their use-by date in terms of using their gifts.

Willingness to give of ourselves – time/effort

Ability to share openly with others. Ability to accept everyone’s individualism.

Understanding that often our areas of weakness are where we have our greatest gifts.

Filipinos being clannish, gifted with great faith, aim to share their gifts and culture with the community.

**How do we recognise the gifts God has given each of us?**

We know/recognise our gifts because we enjoy doing it or when someone tells us we have a talent in a certain area. Or if we are told we are doing the gift well.

Sometimes it can be quite exhausting doing the things we do well – should it be seasonal?

Sharing talents/gifts with others- sometimes we lack confidence to do this or don’t like putting ourselves forward. That’s why encouragement from others is so vital.

Prayerful discernment of gifts is vital.

Leadership is vital. Not about giving people a job or a task but discerning gifts for the Kingdom.

Respect each other’s cultures and the gift of that.

**What would need to be in place for me to share more of my gifts?**

There is a sense of joy in giving to others. We are more likely to share our gifts if:

* A willingness to participate.
* We have a supportive environment
* We are appreciated
* There is a spirit of gratitude
* We acknowledge the gifts and talents of others.
* There is a culture of giving, that we recognise that everyone has gifts, and there are platforms for giving without feeling self-conscious.
* Publicise the needs and expectations
* The idea of perfection needs to be let go of!
* To be asked – or scaffolding in place to assist others, to include others.
* Putting in place the practical things – concrete terms, support given, training given, reminding people of what ministries are available and thriving- hold a ministries fair, put a time limit on service so that you aren’t doing it for 10 years.
* Have audacious projects with a purpose – work for a common goal, have fun, get to know one another. Working together, hearing from each other.

Do we place too much responsibility on retired people who are perceived to have the time.

Attitude is important with gifts. They are not ours.

Is there a process for discerning gifts if you are not sure of yours? It is easier to discern others’ gifts. Encouragement the key! How do we as a parish encourage?

**What do I need to let go of, to allow the gifts of others to flourish?**

We need to let go of the tall poppy syndrome and what other people think.

Preconceived ideas about who can serve and who can’t!

We need to make sure we don’t become too possessive of our personal gifts and talents.

We need to let go of any fears and take up new challenges, have the ability to try new things and to take risks.

We need to step back and give others the opportunity to flourish.

We should provide coaching and mentoring for others.

Embrace others’ ideas.

A spirit of open-mindedness at every level.

Hierarchy – control over an area – let go of it!

**LEADERSHIP TEAM EVENING DISCERNMENT**

*Reflecting on the discernment from parish conversations earlier in the day, how might you incorporate their wisdom into your plans for the parish and a stewardship way of life?*

**Goal:** To provide opportunities which allow people to find belonging in our community.

**Possible Actions:**

1. Find ways to keep connections with children who are baptised from the parish. Build on-going relationships. Acknowledge baptised child’s birthdays until school age.
2. An invitation to our Remembrance Mass to all those who have family, friends, who have passed away during the year. Acknowledge with a sympathy card at the time of death, and again a few months on, so that parishioners know they are held in prayer.
3. Find ways as a parish to acknowledge, encourage, support, enrich a person’s talents.
4. School class to take responsibility for children’s Mass.
5. Continue the Catholic Women’s League tradition of giving a Holy Card to each First Communicant, in doing so acknowledging that they are being prayed for, and that they are special.
6. Find ways to acknowledge newcomers to the parish, and have a welcome pack ready for all newcomers.
7. Find ways to strengthen parish links with schools and vice versa. A seamless community. Be open to each other’s ideas.
8. Make hospitality our first rule.