



OUR EXPERIENCE OF BEING A PARISH-IN-COUNCIL



PARISH-IN-COUNCIL



3 x

May, August,
November



85

Average
Participants



Saturday

Afternoons
12 to 5 pm



CONVERSATION IN THE SPIRIT

CONVERSATION IN THE SPIRIT



Encounter



Listen

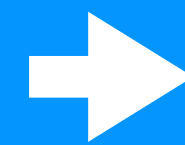


Discern

OUR CONVERSATION METHODOLOGY

First Round of Conversation

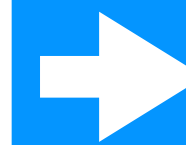
Each person has a chance to speak. There is no discussion in this round. There is a time of silence to allow for reflection.



Second Round of Conversation

Each person shares what has resonated most with him/her in the first round and what moved them during the time of silence.

Again this is followed by a pause for reflection.



Third Round of Conversation

Participants reflect on what moved them most deeply.

Any new insights?

What common themes or fruits of the conversations emerged?

Any unresolved questions?



PREP SESSIONS & PRE-READ MATERIALS

PiC Facilitators & Scribes Table Conversations Guide

Table Conversation 01: Getting to know one another	
Timing	14 minutes
Time Available	circa 2 minutes per parishioner
Table Topic	Icebreaker: brushes with fame
Outline	Each parishioner to share a story of a time they met someone famous or influential. This person might be a political leader (or another type of leader), movie star, musician, celebrity etc - briefly describe the encounter. At the end of the conversation, decide amongst the table one or two 'famous people' the table participants would like the Facilitator to share with the wider PiC group.
Purpose	To become comfortable sharing our stories is a key part of being synodal. We learn more about one another, and share in one another's joys, hopes, fears and disappointments.
Scribe Notes	No notes required.
My Notes	

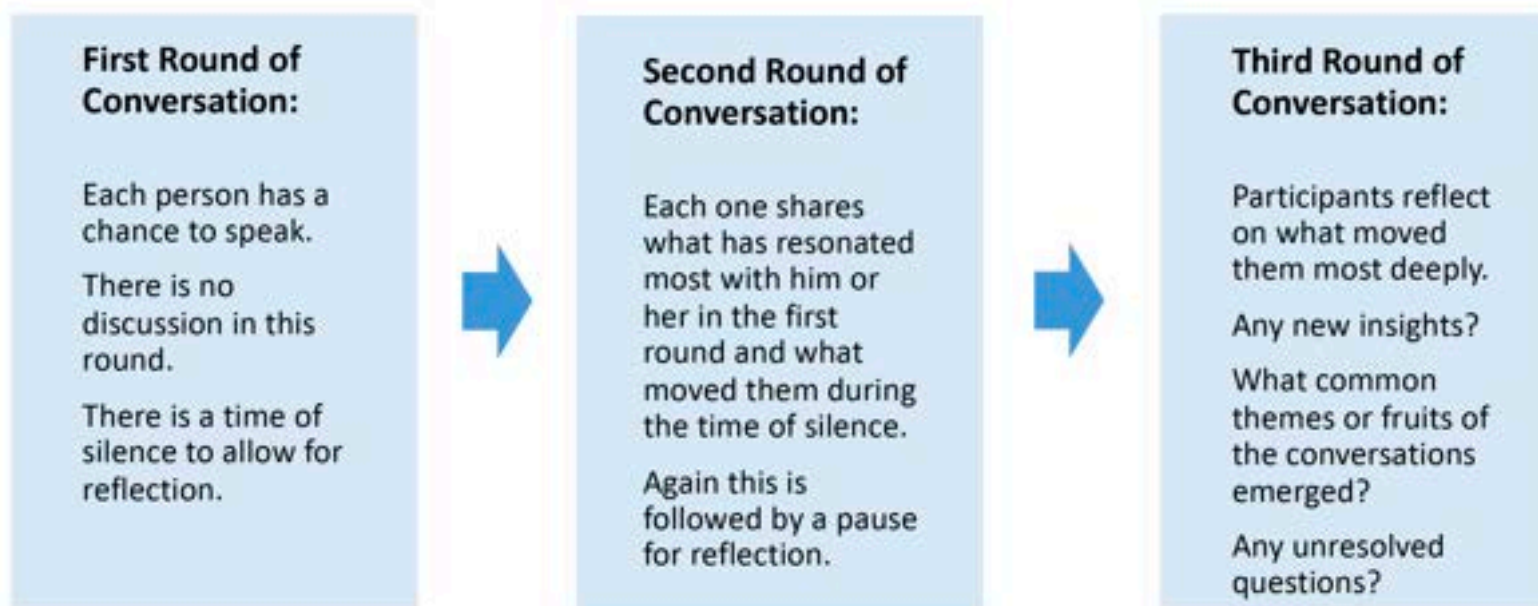
Facilitator Summary: Getting to know one another	
Timing	4 minutes
Time Available	circa 30 seconds per Facilitator
Outline	Facilitators of each table briefly share the chosen famous people from their table with the PiC group.



Process

PROCESS (continued) What steps are involved?

The Table Conversation methodology consists of a series of conversations:



First Round of Conversation:

Each person has a chance to speak.
There is no discussion in this round.
There is a time of silence to allow for reflection.

Second Round of Conversation:

Each one shares what has resonated most with him or her in the first round and what moved them during the time of silence.
Again this is followed by a pause for reflection.

Third Round of Conversation:

Participants reflect on what moved them most deeply.
Any new insights?
What common themes or fruits of the conversations emerged?
Any unresolved questions?



Part to Play

PART TO PLAY (continued)

Role of the Facilitator

- G**uide with intent
- R**ecognise and manage group dynamics
- A**ddress common challenges that may arise
- C**learly summarise main points or key takeaways
- E**mbark on this journey with a receptive heart



Role of the Scribe

- **S**ystematically document the discussion
- **C**apture crucial ideas, decisions, and insights
- **R**ecord action items and responsible parties
- **I**nclude the session's key moments and important details
- **B**e the keeper of the group's collective wisdom
- **E**nsure that the conversation's content is reliably preserved

FACILITATOR DO'S

Maintain a prayerful atmosphere

Fr. David will begin the Parish-in-Council with prayer and opening liturgy, inviting the Holy Spirit's guidance and wisdom. Continue to foster an atmosphere of reverence and openness to God's leading within each table conversation.

Create a safe and respectful environment

Encourage an safe, open, non-judgmental and respectful environment where all participants feel comfortable sharing their experiences and stories - ensuring that everyone feels heard and valued.

Emphasise active listening

Encourage participants to actively listen to one another, respecting each other's diverse experiences and seeking to understand before moving to the next participant. Summarising a participant's response back can be helpful.

Facilitate dialogue, not monologue

Facilitate discussions that flow naturally linking individual stories together where possible.

Encourage sharing of personal faith experiences

Invite participants to share personal stories relating to their experiences in response to each question and exercise.

Promote discernment, not debate

If needed, remind the table that the table conversations are opportunities for shared discernment of God's will rather than debates on personal opinions that may divide.

Facilitate balanced participation

Ensure that each participant has an opportunity to speak without feeling pressured or rushed. Monitor the discussion flow and gently encourage quieter participants to share their experiences and stories.

Address any disrespectful behaviour

Be sure to promptly address any disrespectful or disruptive behaviour. Remind participants to treat each other with kindness and respect.

FACILITATOR DON'TS

Avoid dominating the conversation

As a facilitator, avoid dominating the conversation or imposing personal viewpoints. Your role is to guide the participants in conversation, not to dominate.

Don't allow an individual to dominate the session

Instead, move around the table and make space for all at the table to share. This can be done effectively through engaging in eye contact.

Don't overlook the importance of prayer

The Holy Spirit's guidance is essential for fruitful table conversations and discerning God's will for our parish.

Avoid jumping to conclusions/solutions

Avoid the temptation to prematurely rush to conclusions/solutions during conversations. Allow the process of prayerful reflection and empathetic, active listening to guide the group towards understanding and discernment.

Avoid rushing

Avoid rushing through participant stories.

Don't impose opinions

Refrain from expressing personal opinions or beliefs during the table conversation.

The focus should be on creating a space for participants to explore their own reactions and share their personal experiences rather than being influenced by the facilitator's or others views.

**What can we do as parishioners
to create a true sense of belonging
in our parish?**





sense of
h, what
up?

minut



Shift Lady
YVONNE



**QUIET
REFLECTION**

2 minutes

**From Brendan's presentation
about creating a true sense
of belonging in our parish,
what stood out for you?**





**QUIET
REFLECTION**

1 minute

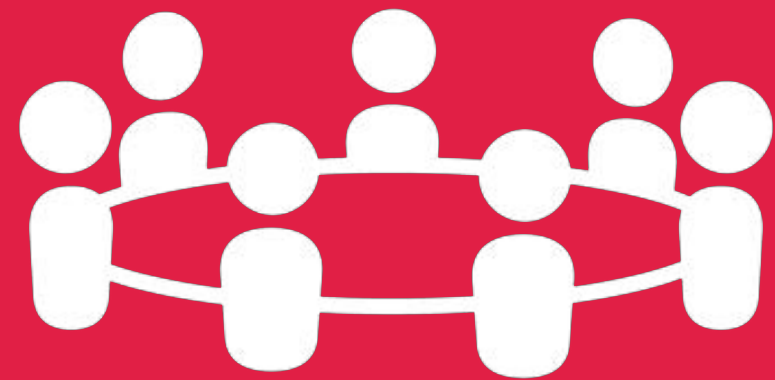
**Casting our minds five years
ahead, if we were truly
creating a sense of belonging
for all, what would our parish
be like?**



**QUIET
REFLECTION**

1 minute

**How can we transform our
parish into a place that
warmly welcomes people,
ensuring that everyone feels
known, accepted and
valued?**



**TABLE
CONVERSATION**

14 minutes

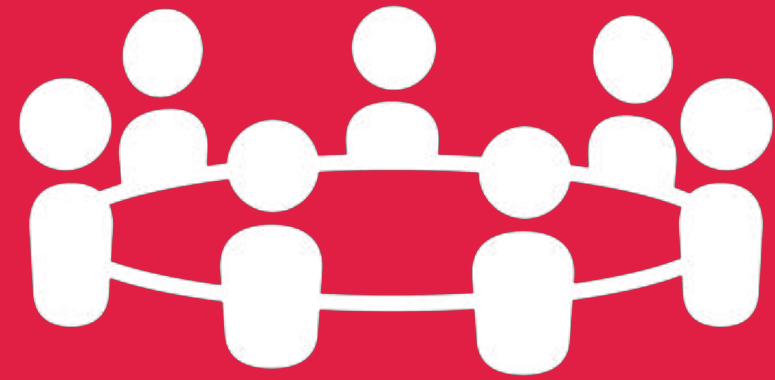
**What immediate, concrete
actions might we take to
create a true sense of
belonging in our parish?**











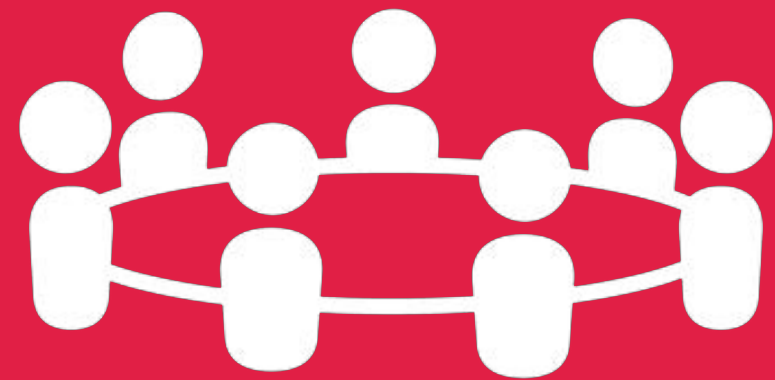
**TABLE
CONVERSATION**

14 minutes

**What stood out, excited or
inspired you the most
during the table
conversation?**







**TABLE
CONVERSATION**

20 minutes

Following on from the table conversations, what have emerged as the top 3 immediate, concrete actions that our parish could implement?











SHARING OUR CONVERSATION

12 minutes

**What have emerged as the
top 3 immediate, concrete,
actions that our parish
could implement?**





TOP 3

- [Sticky Note 1]
- [Sticky Note 2]
- [Sticky Note 3]

OTHER IDEAS

- [Sticky Note 4]
- [Sticky Note 5]
- [Sticky Note 6]
- [Sticky Note 7]
- [Sticky Note 8]
- [Sticky Note 9]

TOP 3

WORKSHOP FOR WELCOMERS

WELCOME SOMEONE YOU DON'T KNOW (WELL) AT EVERY MASS

WEARING NAME TAGS

OTHER IDEAS

FORMING SMALL GROUPS TO BUILD BELONGING

SUPER DONUTS AFTER SCHOOL (OR CRISPS)

WELCOMERS 8 AM EVERY WEEKEND MASS (CALL SIDES)

MORE ENGAGING YOUTH MASS

CULTURAL THEME ACTIVITY/FOOD AFTER MASS

CREATE COHORTS BASED ON LIFE STAGES

CARE TEAM TO REACH EXISTING PARISHIONERS (Eg. LOVELY, GRIEF)

TOP 3

Ecumenical dinners bi-monthly
Inter-faith.

DINNER FOR EIGHT.

FORMATION OF WELCOMERS

Develop welcome ministry, underpinned by formation.

Regular ecumenical gatherings (eg. Invite to ... night)

Inter Ecumenical GATHERINGS Inter-faith

Ecumenical activities Inter-faith

ECUMENICAL GATHERINGS ONCE OR TWICE A YEAR Inter-faith

DINNER FOR 8 Gift to new parishes & sign-up for 'Dinner for 8'

Work on hymns, hospitality + families in each Mass.

Formation close to new comers.

FORMATION OF WELCOMERS

BEAUTIFY BACK OF CHURCH WITH FLOWERS LIKE THE THOMAS

Don't do immediate things, make a careful overall plan.

Volunteers Home visits to those - elderly + - disabled + - Refugees.

BUS FOR ELDERLY - TO BE ABLE TO ATTEND MASS

Strategy on engaging young people.

Name Tags so we can learn each others names including in the pews.

1) Welcoming formation - name tags for new people - welcome pads to be distributed.
2) Tea/coffee/point of prayer - ~~point of prayer~~
3) 10% priority of seats, prayer - ~~prayer~~ ~~prayer~~ ~~prayer~~

Care and Contact Pastoral Care

VISIT THE HOMES OF NEW-COMERS

Have an understanding of discipleship as basis of moving forward.

2) Tea/coffee/point of prayer after Mass

3) possibility of small, home-based bible study/prayer/discipleship group - need discipline + support/supplies

Bus for aged & disabled. Visit them etc.

ACTING ON THE OUTCOMES

Provide formation opportunities for our welcoming team

Mission focus actions

Run an ongoing formation course and provide helpful resources and information for new welcomers e.g., how to approach people, learn people's names, recognise "new faces" and have meaningful conversations.

Host three welcomer afternoons through the year, bringing together the team for formation and friendship.

Expand the use of name badges

Mission focus actions

Promote, offer and encourage all parishioners to have and wear a name badge.

Introduce stickers and cards for newcomers (without a name badge).

Connect parishioners with greater opportunities to love, grow and serve

Mission focus actions

Develop strategies to make the many opportunities for connecting, growing, and serving more apparent to all, especially to our family and friends at OLD Primary School, Mercy College and St Pius X.

Review and improve the promotion and dissemination of our parish event calendar and what is already available in our parish.

Introduce volunteer coordinators to approach if a parishioner has an idea or wants to be involved further.

Develop a strategy and a team for welcoming new parishioners with a clear process to belonging e.g., buddies, bbq's, chat groups, matching to opportunities etc

Introduce a Care & Contact team run by volunteer parishioners to reach out within our parish community to the elderly, disabled, lonely, grieving or recently missing from church.



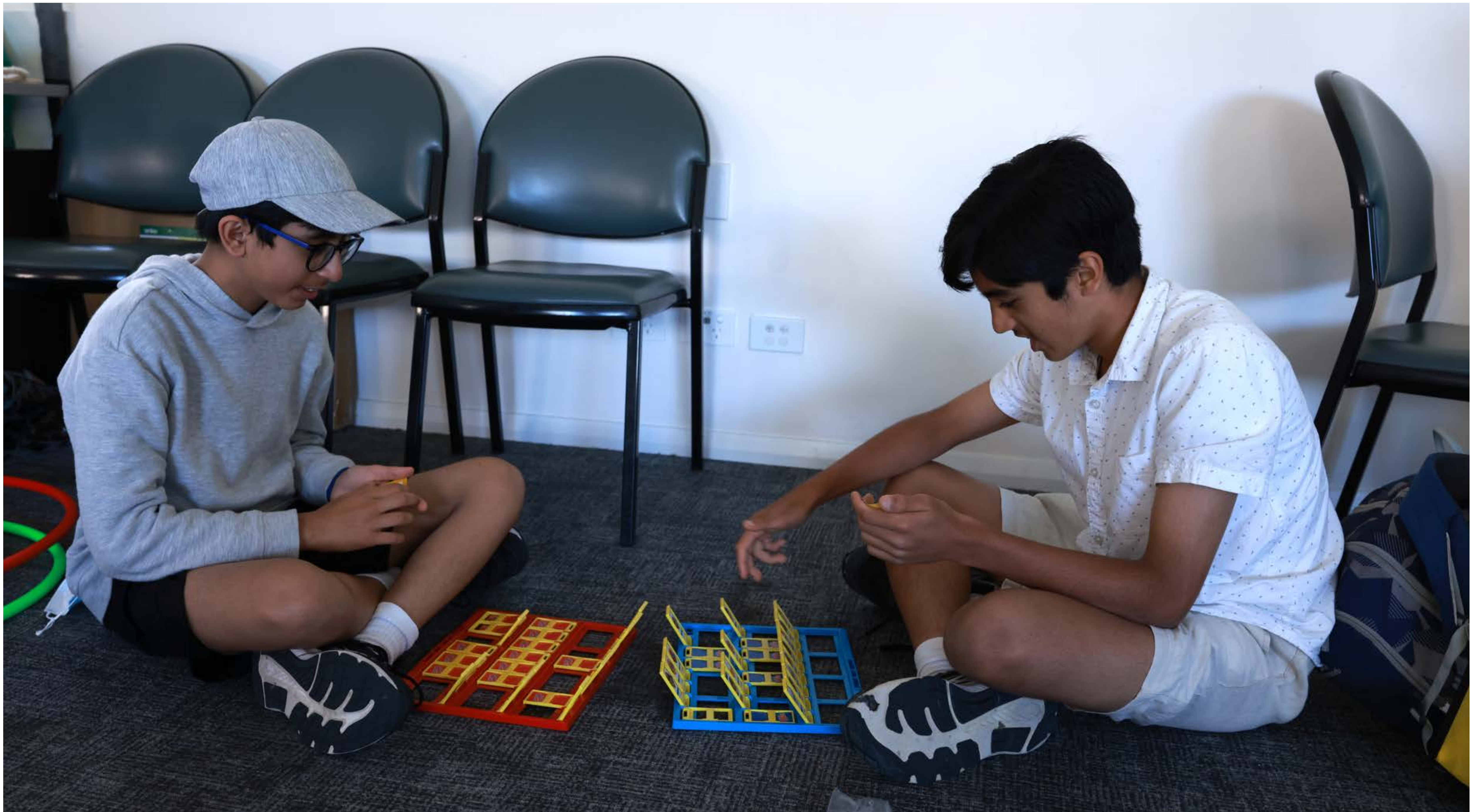
KIDS-IN-COUNCIL







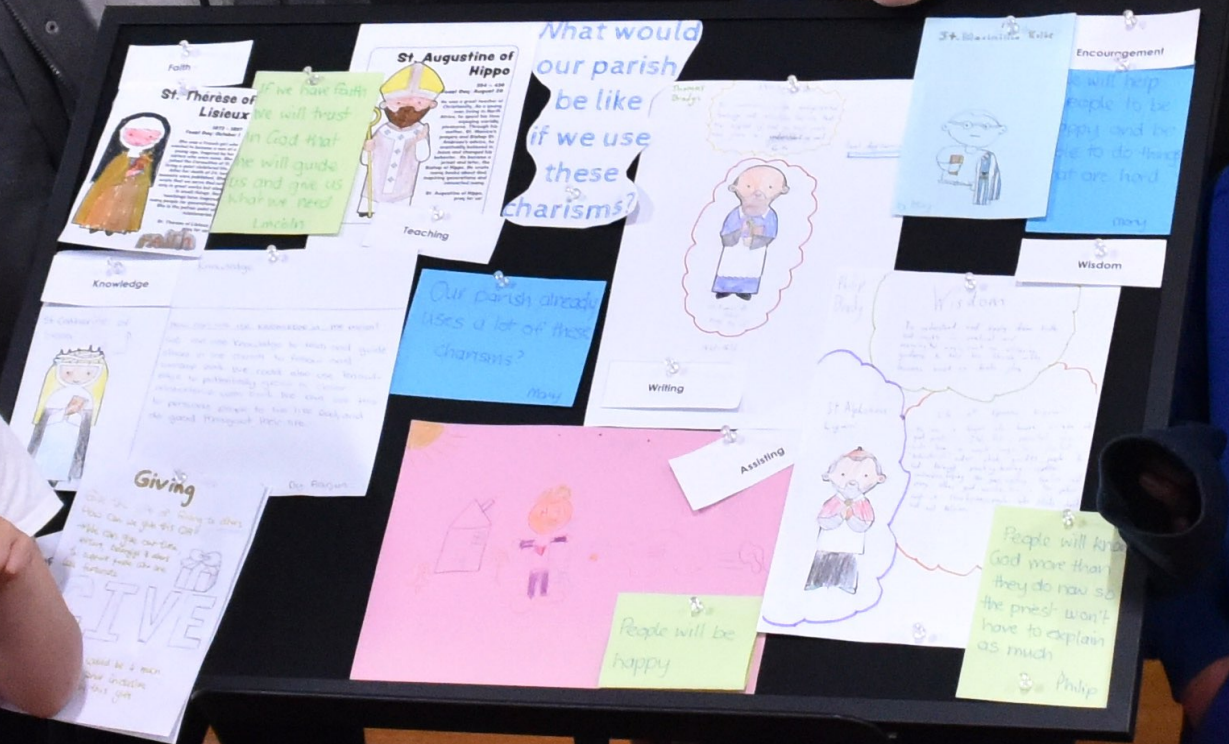









BEING
CHURCH
IN THE
CITY



Faith

St. Thérèse of Lisieux
1873 - 1897
Feast Day: October 1



She was a French girl who lived in the town of Lisieux in Normandy. She was very young when she died, but she is remembered for her love of God and her simple life. She is known as the 'Little Flower'.

Faith

If we have faith
we will trust
in God that
he will guide
us and give us
what we need
Lucy

St. Augustine of Hippo
354 - 430
Feast Day: August 28



He was a great teacher of Christianity. He was born in North Africa, in a town called Hippo. He became a priest and then a bishop. He wrote many books about God, including the famous 'Confessions' and 'The City of God'.

Teaching

What would
our parish
be like
if we use
these
charisms?


Thought
Bubble

...



Writing

St. Martin of Tours
316 - 357
Feast Day: November 11



He was a Roman soldier who became a Christian. He is famous for the story of him sharing his cloak with a poor man on a cold day. He became a bishop and is known for his charity.

Encouragement

... will help
people to be
happy and be
able to do things
that are hard
Mary

Wisdom

Our parish already
uses a lot of these
charisms?
Mary

Wisdom

To understand and apply the truth
of God's word in our lives and
to make good choices in our
actions and decisions.

St. Apollonia
Lyon



Assisting

...

People will know
God more than
they do now so
the priest won't
have to explain
as much

Knowledge

...

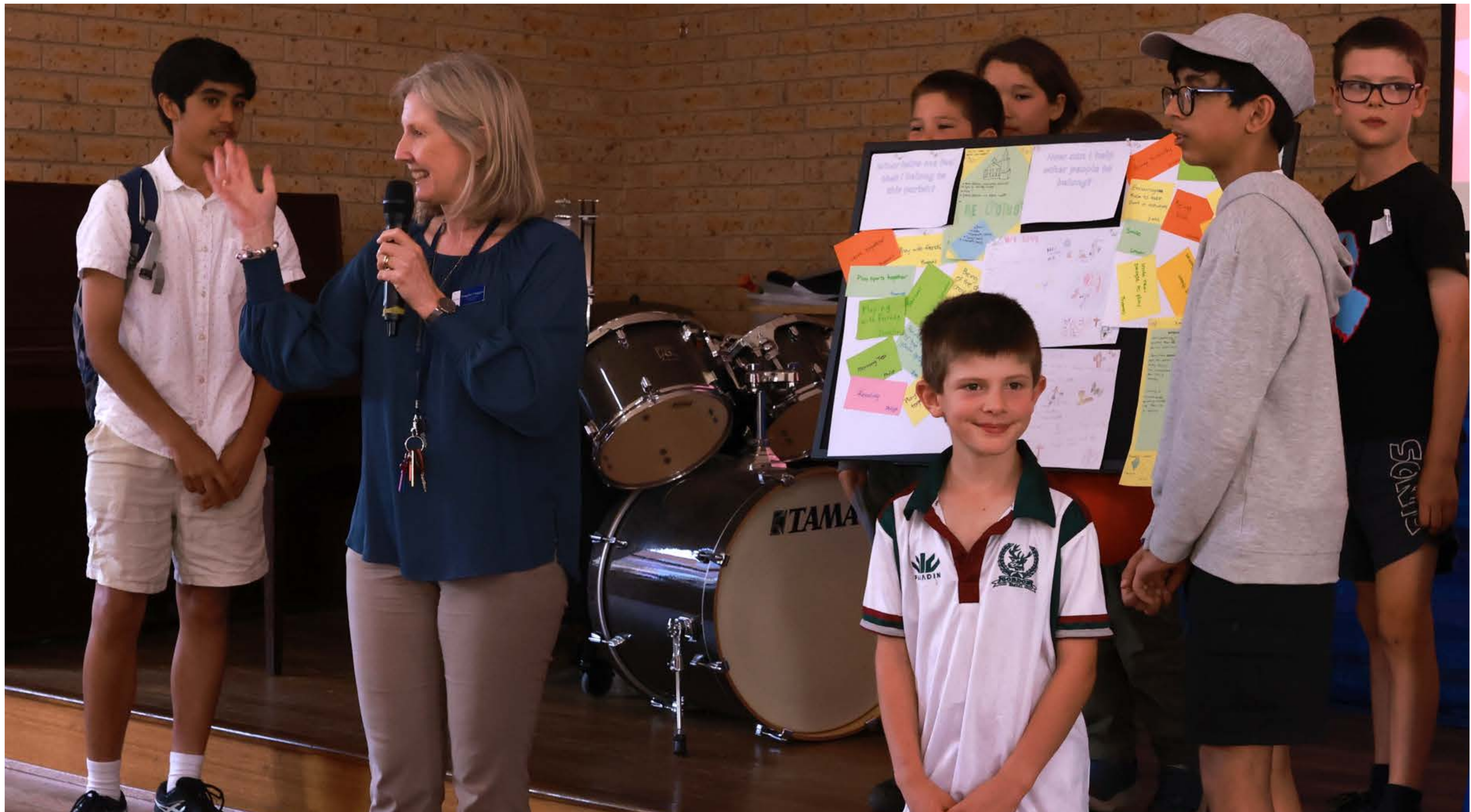
Giving

...

GIVING

...

People will be

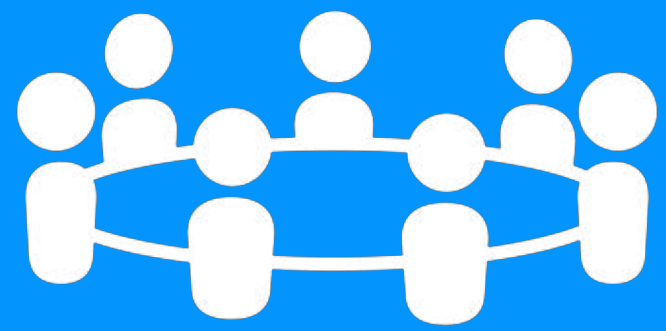






STUDENTS IN COUNCIL





CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

WHAT DIDN'T WORK WELL?



WHAT COULD BE CHANGED/IMPROVED?



GENERAL COMMENTS

A word cloud of general comments in various shades of blue. The most prominent words are 'Thank you', 'Well organised', 'Well done', and 'Congratulations'. Other visible words include 'Good vibe', 'A promising initiative', 'Very well done', 'Very happy', 'Very good experience', 'Well planned day', 'A fantastic opportunity to meet and speak and listen and feel that the possibilities for parish are', 'A well organised event', 'A great opportunity to meet others', 'Very well run day', 'Very fruitful gathering', 'Such a great experience', 'Overall a success and very well run', 'Well coordinated', 'I am excited about the amazing ways the Spirit will move (and is moving) in our parish', 'Thank you for including us all', 'Congratulations for a successful PiC', 'Congratulations for a successful first parish in council', 'Thank you for the team and all involved', 'Thank you all for setting this up', 'Successful Parish Council', 'Could you give us today's discussion talking (by email)', 'A well organised event', 'Thank you for a very good and informative afternoon', 'Well organised', 'A promising initiative', 'Thank you for this session and your vision for this mission', 'Well planned day', 'Thank you for all the hard work for this wonderful day. Thanks', 'Very happy', 'This was a great time together and the sharing more enlightening', 'Very good experience', 'Thank you for lunch and to the helpers', 'Well organised', 'A promising initiative', 'Thank you for the opportunity to participate', 'Well done all the organisers and Parish staff and all the helpers too', 'Atmosphere is relaxing and friendly', 'Great start to the process', 'It was a great day', 'Thank you to all those who worked behind the scenes', 'More table discussions', 'A great opportunity to meet others', 'Very well done', 'Congratulations to the organisers', 'Sue was an excellent facilitator', 'It will be interesting to see what develops from this', 'I enjoyed meeting new people and the open sharing', 'Some people wanted to know how Parish in Council connects to "operational outcomes"', 'What an enjoyable, productive and affirming afternoon', 'Inclusion of services the parish are involved in', 'Thank you for organising the day looking forward to another one', 'Wonderful experience of inclusivity, shared leadership, community', 'It would be good to communicate and establish our parish groups at the end of each mass. How parishes?

Thank you

Well organised

Well done

Congratulations

Good vibe

A promising initiative

Very well done

Very happy

Very good experience

Well planned day

A fantastic opportunity to meet and speak and listen and feel that the possibilities for parish are

A well organised event

A great opportunity to meet others

Very well run day

Very fruitful gathering

Such a great experience

Overall a success and very well run

Well coordinated

I am excited about the amazing ways the Spirit will move (and is moving) in our parish

Thank you for including us all

Congratulations for a successful PiC

Congratulations for a successful first parish in council

Thank you for the team and all involved

Thank you all for setting this up

Successful Parish Council

Could you give us today's discussion talking (by email)

A well organised event

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Well organised

A promising initiative

Thank you for this session and your vision for this mission

Well planned day

Thank you for all the hard work for this wonderful day. Thanks

Very happy

This was a great time together and the sharing more enlightening

Very good experience

Thank you for lunch and to the helpers

Well done all the organisers and Parish staff and all the helpers too

Atmosphere is relaxing and friendly

Great start to the process

It was a great day

Thank you to all those who worked behind the scenes

More table discussions

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Very well done

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Sue was an excellent facilitator

It will be interesting to see what develops from this

I enjoyed meeting new people and the open sharing

Some people wanted to know how Parish in Council connects to "operational outcomes"

What an enjoyable, productive and affirming afternoon

Inclusion of services the parish are involved in

Thank you for organising the day looking forward to another one

Wonderful experience of inclusivity, shared leadership, community

It would be good to communicate and establish our parish groups at the end of each mass. How parishes?

THE MAIN REASON FOR YOUR SCORE...



**WHERE DO WE
WANT TO GO?**







Casting our minds five years ahead, if we were fully living out our mission, what would our parish be like?

WHAT COULD OUR PARISH BE LIKE?

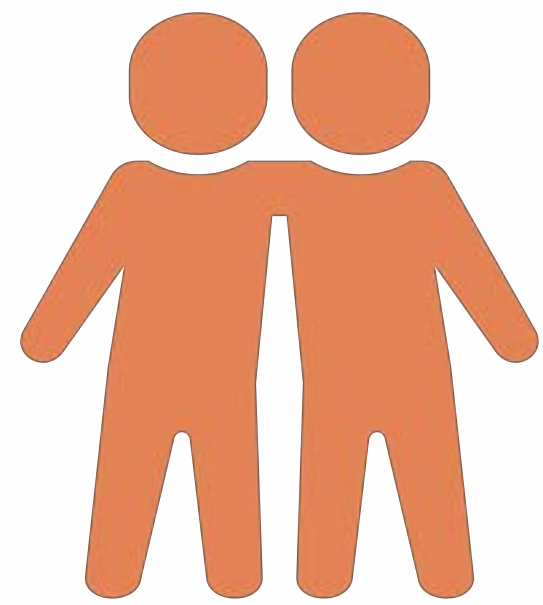


OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE

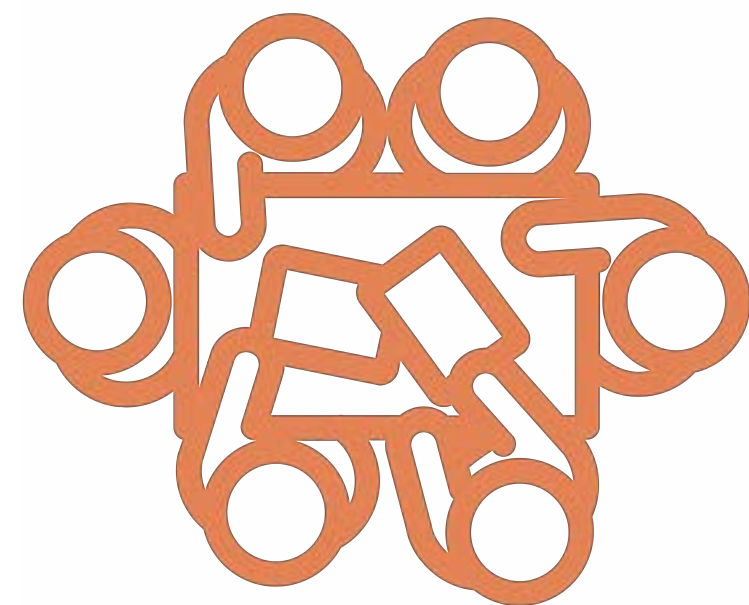
Welcoming
Accessible Openness
Social Activities
Support
Diversity
Young People
Nurturing
Chinese Community
Care
Faith Formation Engage the Youth Leadership
Seniors
Participation
Community
Help
Engaging
Values Multicultural Families
Love
Inclusive Connect Outreach
Sanctuary
Elderly Nourishing
Serve Understanding
Warmth
Welcoming
Growth
Inclusion
Faithful
Involved Open Innovation Children
Lighthouse
Change
Belonging
Charity New Facilities
Connected Impact
Vibrancy
Passion
Music
Belonging
New Services Investment Prayer
Energised Strengthen

FULLY LIVING OUT OUR MISSION

Arising from our table conversations were five key areas of focus for the next five years to fully live out our Mission - our Vision...



Creating a sense of belonging for all



Participating in the life of our parish



Igniting young hearts



Reaching out with love



Serving our community

**HOW ARE WE
GOING TO GET
THERE?**



OUR PARISH PRIORITIES

Chatswood Catholic Parish Australia OUR 2024-25 PRIORITIES



Guided by the Holy Spirit, and enabled by its ordained leadership, our Chatswood parish community is journeying together as a synodal parish, with a shared **mission** of...

Bringing the light of Christ to the city we love, we grow, we serve

Our parish is blessed with ten **ministry circles**, each offering opportunities for people of all ages to come together as a community of faith and grow as disciples of Jesus...



To fully live out our God given mission, during 2024-2025 our parish community will be prioritising attention and resources on five areas of **mission focus**, mandated through the service of our Pastor's leadership...

<p>Creating a sense of belonging for all</p> <p>Together we will warmly welcome people of all ages and backgrounds, fostering a vibrant and inclusive community, where everyone feels accepted, valued and known.</p>	<p>Participating in the life of our parish</p> <p>Together we will deepen our faith, growing as disciples and actively participating in the life of our parish through diverse opportunities to love, grow and serve.</p>	<p>Igniting young hearts</p> <p>Together we will inspire, energise and support children, teens, young adults and families, providing opportunities to foster and enrich their faith.</p>
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<p>Reaching out with love</p> <p>Together we will compassionately and confidently connect with people, wherever they are in their faith journey, offering a safe, joy-filled place to embrace Jesus as their saviour.</p>	<p>Serving our community</p> <p>Together we will open our hearts to those in need, building relationships, speaking up and fostering hope, through kindness and solidarity with the marginalised in our community and the world.</p>
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To enable and support the achievement of these areas of mission focus, during 2024-2025 we will also prioritise the development of six **mission enablers**...

Being a synodal parish, journeying together	Leveraging technology	Connecting via communications	Developing a culture of giving
Aligning strategy and resources	Enhancing buildings and facilities		

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Being a synodal parish, journeying together

Leveraging technology

Connecting via communications

Developing a culture of giving

Aligning strategy and resources

Enhancing buildings and facilities

OUR AREAS OF MISSION FOCUS

During our 2023 Parish-in-Councils, in a series of table conversations in the Spirit, we began the process of together discerning and distilling God's unique will for our parish into a Vision Statement.

Directly arising from these table conversations were five key areas of mission focus for our parish to fully live out our Mission and achieve our Vision. In 2024-2025, our parish community at every level, will be prioritising attention and resources on these five areas of mission focus, mandated through the service of our Pastor's leadership...



1. Creating a sense of belonging for all

Together we will warmly welcome people of all ages and backgrounds, fostering a vibrant and inclusive community, where everyone feels accepted, valued and known.



Develop a shared sense of responsibility for all of us to be welcoming

Mission focus actions

Continue to build a strong culture of welcoming and hospitality in our parish – welcoming is everyone's responsibility.

Encourage people who stay in the foyer during Mass to come into the church.

Encourage everyone to welcome and say hello to someone they do not know well at every Mass.

Extend and grow our welcoming team

Mission focus actions

Inspire, encourage and recruit new newcomers to join the team.

Attract more teenage and young adult newcomers, especially to our Sunday 5.30 pm Mass.

Add more children and their parents to the team, particularly at our 9 am Sunday Mass.

Team members to offer a warm welcome presentation prior to each Mass, and at the conclusion of each Mass, read out the parish updates.

Introduce a buddy system, helping new newcomers feel comfortable and confident.

Develop a welcoming plan for before and after each key Mass through the year e.g., Easter, Christmas, Red Mass, Ash Wednesday.

Welcome at all doors before and after each weekend Mass.

Introduce a Welcomer Lead and backup for each Mass time.

Welcome parishioners further out from the church doors e.g., carparks and walk them to the church.

Provide formation opportunities for our welcoming team

Mission focus actions

Run an ongoing formation course and provide helpful resources and information for new newcomers e.g., how to approach people, learn people's names, recognise "new faces" and have meaningful conversations.

Host three welcomer afternoons through the year, bringing together the team for formation and friendship.

Expand the use of name badges

Mission focus actions

Promote, offer and encourage all parishioners to have and wear a name badge.

Introduce stickers and cards for newcomers (without a name badge).

Connect parishioners with greater opportunities to love, grow and serve

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Develop strategies to make the many opportunities for connecting, growing, and serving more apparent to all, especially to our family and friends at OLD Primary School, Mercy College and St Pius X.

Review and improve the promotion and dissemination of our parish event calendar and what is already available in our parish.

Introduce volunteer coordinators to approach if a parishioner has an idea or wants to be involved further.

Develop a strategy and a team for welcoming new newcomers with a clear process to belonging e.g., buddies, bbq's, chat groups, matching to opportunities etc.

Introduce a Care & Contact team run by volunteer parishioners to reach out within our parish community to the elderly, disabled, lonely, grieving or recently missing from church.

Invest in and offer regular hospitality

Mission focus actions

Invest in equipment for more regular and sustained hospitality on our forecourt, and in our PEW garden, after Masses and during the week.

Introduce coffee and tea cart hospitality after all weekend Masses.

Utilise the PEW more, including games and activities.

Reintroduce Community Dinners once a month after the Saturday 5.30 pm Mass.

Introduce Seniors' gatherings and have volunteers bring them to Mass and social activities.

Plan and introduce additional culturally themed activities including food fairs.

JOURNEYING TOGETHER

Very Rev Dr David Ranson PP VG

david.ranson@bbcatholic.org.au

Brendan Tertini

brendan@churchinthecity.com.au