St Laurence O'Toole Kilmacud

Parish Assembly, November 2018



"Meeting People where they're at and leading them to where God calls them to be"



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This report outlines the response from St Laurence O'Toole, Kilmacud to the request by Archbishop Diarmuid Martin that we reflect on the future of our parishes, following the World Meeting of Families and the visit of Pope Francis to Ireland.

During our parish assembly in November 2018, we considered the pastoral future of our parish community.

Five key questions were considered during this period of reflection on the future of our parish.

How can we

- Make our parish a place of welcome?
- Make our parish attractive to young people?
- Support parents in sharing the faith?
- Enrich the quality of worship?
- Support the priests and share leadership of our parish?

Parishioners had many ways to share their views including attending a parish assembly, completing questionnaires in the church and through social media.

This report summarises the views expressed by parishioners during this period of reflection in our parish.

We thank all those who participated - their desire to build on the strong foundations laid in our parish and for our church community to grow and strengthen in the years ahead was very evident and is a great encouragement.

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Here is what you said we are grateful for in our Parish:

- The Priests and the availability of mass
- Music in our Sunday mass celebrations
- The Children's mass
- The 'Do This In Memory of Me' Programme
- The support given at times of bereavement
- The parish webcam maintaining a connection with the housebound
- The Parish Centre an important resource for use by all in the parish
- Volunteers who give their time

And what is important in strengthening our parish community:

- Stronger links with local schools, sports clubs, and other groups active in the parish
- Welcoming new parishioners and making them feel involved
- Building a sense of belonging helping parishioners to get to know each other
- Getting more young people active in our church
- Bringing the liturgy alive
- More volunteers
- More communication about what is happening within our church and the wider parish

Here is a summary of the responses to the questions asked:

Making our parish a place of welcome	Friendly Greetings: Welcome people to church - volunteers on the door, introduce yourself at the sign of peace; smile and speak to a stranger as you leave the church; the priests to greet people as they leave.
	Host coffee mornings after mass (perhaps once a month); an annual family day; events for young people; to facilitate community.
	Develop welcome packs for new parishioners. Host a welcoming Sunday once a year.
	Be an inclusive and welcoming place for everyone - young, old, the marginalised, LGBTQ. Hold an annual mass for those who feel excluded (divorced; LGBTQ; people who have lost their faith).Embrace all races, religions, genders, sexualities of people who follow God
	Encourage young people to take roles in our church and parish. Involve them in all aspects of the mass.
	Strengthen our connections with the Mosque in Clonskeagh and St. Brigid's, Stillorgan. (Shared understanding).

Making our parish more attractive to young people	Teenagers love social justice / environmental issues – start projects to involve these subjects. Eg; Parish projects with the homeless, older people, people with disabilities; asylum seekers. (See how young people got involved with WWYC).
	A youth club where young people could gather and engage in activities. Give young people an opportunity to socialise.
	Give young people roles in the church - teenagers to organise a monthly mass, including giving the sermon, writing the prayers of the faithful, etc.
	Be a welcoming place open to differing views and less judgemental.
	More interfaith worship. Young people who responded want us to reach out and be inclusive to those of other religions too.

How can we help parents share the faith at home	The important role of grandparents in passing on the faith should be promoted and encouraged.	
	Adult Faith Education programme - a series over a few weeks to educate/ re-educate the parents in the basics of the faith.	
	Using the Do This In Memory of Me Programme as a template, develop other programmes that would encourage continued attendance at mass and help parents to maintain a focus on prayer.	
	The schools are an important link and we need to re-examine how the church connects with the schools	
	Hold family events at which discussions can be had about faith in the home.	
	A 'Sunday School' for children during mass where they can interact with other children and learn about their faith. Toddler mornings where parents can meet.	

Enriching the quality of worship	The overwhelming sense is that the liturgy is 'dead'. There is no energy in how it is presented and no life in the responses from the congregation.
	Priests to explain what
	Make sermons shorter - 5 minutes and relevant to life today. Invite others to give the homily, not just priests. Invite women also.
	Music to be a central part of celebration of the Eucharist.
	A renewed focus on adoration of the blessed sacrament would strengthen the parish. A parish mission. Lecto Divina in Lent / Advent.
	Children need to be given a bigger role to play throughout the church - not just at the 6.00pm mass.
	Use the screens in the church throughout the mass displaying all responses, when people should stand / kneel.

How can we support the priests and share the leadership of our parish?	The entire structure of the parish needs to be considered - and discussed by priest and archbishop Hold meetings to inform people of the parish goals, show the priests that the people in the community support them	
	Give the next generation roles and support them to become leaders.	
	The appointment of a deacon to the parish by the archbishop	
	More volunteers! Hold a volunteer recruitment day; encourage existing volunteers to 'ask a friend'.	

Pastoral Council Response

Many worthwhile and creative ideas were made by parishioners. A longer document is available in the Parish Office detailing all of the responses received.

Unfortunately, without more volunteers in the parish, we will not be able to implement all of the suggestions received immediately. However, the responses put forward will guide the work of the Pastoral Council over the next 2 years.

We have identified the following pastoral priorities for 2019:

• Volunteers

- Hold a recruitment drive for new volunteers
- Promote the work of our volunteers throughout the year
- Safeguarding training and garda vetting for all volunteers

• Making our parish a place of welcome

- Hold occasional coffee mornings after Sunday masses
- Establish a team of parishioners to meet people on arrival at mass
- Encourage more interaction with a "July Smile" programme
- Invite new parishioners to make themselves known so they can be welcomed

• Outreach to young people and young adults

- Exam prayers and interfaith services for young people
- Identify how young people can become involved with social justice groups in our parish eg St Vincent de Paul, Simon of Cyrene, etc
- Give young people more roles within the mass including writing prayers of faithful, collecting baskets, reading, etc
- Hold an event for young people in the parish centre a talk / film / discussion on a topic of interest to them.

• Enriching the quality of worship

- Establish a liturgy group within the Parish
- Use the screens and technology to better effect
- Music at 10.00am mass
- Support for parents in faith formation

Next Steps

To progress the priorities for 2019 the Pastoral Council will:

- Seek new volunteers for the parish, across all parish groups.
- Seek volunteers to establish a liturgy group. This group will help identify additional talks, retreats, prayer / adoration and events that we can hold in our parish to strengthen and renew our faith.
- Identify how we might develop a youth council to guide us in how best to attract and retain young people.
- Engage with parents to develop a support programme for them to pass on the faith.



St Laurence O'Toole, Kilmacud Lower Kilmacud Road 01 288 4009

Can You Help?

Kilmacud has an active team of dedicated volunteers who help ensure the smooth running of the church and parish activities.

If you can spare some time and are willing to support our parish to continue to extend our outreach, we would love to invite you to volunteer in an area where you feel you can best contribute.

Volunteer ministry in our parish include Baptismal Team; Children's Mass, Flower Arranging, Funeral Ministry, Grounds Maintenance, Hospitality, Liturgy Group, Ministers of the Eucharist, Ministers of the Word, Website & Social Media to name but a few.

If you would like to join our volunteers, please complete the form and drop it into Christine in the Parish Office or email kilmacudparish@gmail.com

Name:		
Email:		
Phone Number:		
Area of Interest:		
Relevant Skills:		

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