

Where is the Spirit Leading us as a Parish.

### **We love the way our parish:**

- Is becoming a place where people share their own gifts in creative and diverse ways:
  - cultural - coming together
  - sharing reflections on the Sunday readings
  - Social outreach (including contributing to the food bank).
- Has a ministry to elderly, and others, who are not able to come to Mass - it's lovely to know they are connected.
  - The live-streamed Mass is great too, in this context.
- Has parishioners who support the parish priest in ministries and decision-making. Could this be better?

### **Ideas**

- Could our parish become a centre of learning about being Catholic? This could include knowledge input and discussion. We could survey people, get topics, and establish a calendar and times. This could serve the whole city. (Elim do something similar, why not us?) Colin would be happy to help.
- We have a men's breakfast group, and a new women's scripture group, maybe there could be a young mothers' coffee mornings with children. (If there's not already.)
- Could we connect better with people who stop coming to Mass; or how could we? (Eg. What's happening with Warren?)
- How do we encourage stronger relationships between, and commitment to, parish and schools? (Would a robust parish data-base help – which we might already have.)
- To ask questions – not in order to seek factual 'answers' but to draw out 'responses' from our own hearts- so we know for ourselves what action we can respond with, each in our own way.

Eg What does faith mean for me? What is it about our faith that we want to hand on to our children? What does it mean for me to be a disciple? What does it mean for me to be a Catholic? What does it mean for me to be a parishioner at Mercy Parish? Maybe having a close look at the Creed and what we profess - what that means for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

- To somehow connect much more closely with our schools and families- what struggles are families with children dealing with and how can we best support them?
- Listen to and connect with the ethnic communities in our Parish.
- Be a Parish which seeks to learn more about bi-culturalism and how we can continue on that journey.

- Continue to develop practical support for the holistic vision of Laudato Si' and Fratelli Tutti
- Continue to support ecumenical and interfaith initiatives- including support for the Muslim community
- Continue on the journey to be inclusive and welcoming- to engender a sense of mercy, compassion and aroha- leading to belonging.
- To be grateful.

Here I am joining you on line this morning. As a relative new comer to the parish the thing that stands out is the very real sense of community. I love it that we are not a white middle class group of people and that the same spectrum of people that sit in the pews actively contribute to the liturgy. For me on a personal level it would be a safe place to bring my gay friends, and it has been a safe place to figure out my response to the End of Life bill. Integrity and compassion go hand in hand. For me this is the basis of the gospel and the gift we have for our community

- As a Parish: There is a lot we do very well, and it is so encouraging to see how far we have grown since those very early days, when we were four parishes coming together.
- My thoughts for the future turn outward to beyond our walls as outreach to those in our community unable to attend..
- Specifically, I would like to focus on the fact that it is a given fact that in the next few years, NZ (and especially Dunedin) will have a very high number of people over 80. I think we are in a prime position in South Dunedin to provide more for our elderly parishioners.
- e.g maybe employ a pastoral worker/visitor (partly funded by the Diocese) - hey it's not just a South D problem!
  - look at visitor trees perhaps where the 'active retired' are police checked and then matched to go and visit one other 'at home unwell elderly during the week. Some elderly just want to have a phone call each week. Worth a thought?
  - somehow look at how we can provide some sort of 'after care' when people are discharged from hospital/respice care. Do they need meal support? Extra visits? Phone calls?
  - develop a ministry team that has this group as its focus!

- Guidance continued under Gerard
- Suggest we have a list of people willing to transport elderly to Mass.
- To not shy away from hard conversations and current events.
- To be in community with those different from us.
- Tolerance of all.
- I think the spirit is leading us to be a sign of unity as we come together as a diverse community.
- To look after each other as we try to be better people and Love God more.
- To unify us together and share our thoughts and actions.
- To be known as loving and friendly. We could even promote the community gardens.
- To increase our care of the vulnerable.
- Modernise to appeal to the youth, music/message
- What will we look like in five years.
- To embrace the wide ethnicities of our parish, respect the view points of all and be united in showing Dunedin a Christian parish in action.
- Towards God and to be closer to God in everyone and to seek, to hear to be like him.
- I think we are a caring parish and hopefully will grow. More people need to offer themselves for duties. We are living in uncertain times but I have faith we will all join together again as a united parish.
- I think we should try harder to join together in the parish societies already established. Perhaps also encourage us together (weekly/monthly) in prayer for ourselves and our community.
- There are a lot of elderly people who probably need help around the home with grass cutting and cleaning windows. Some of us could help them if we knew who they were.
- I feel forward no I have said wrong I know we are forward.
- We need to think of new ways to stay in touch. With COVID fewer parishioners are coming to Mass, my fear is many won't return.
- The other thing is our parish contains many elderly/isolated people. Online Mass won't work for many.
- Perhaps we should have a buddy phone system to check on people and share parish news.
- This parish has the opportunity to fully integrate all the diversity in it. I personally like the Samoan singing. Can we have Indian, Filipino, European etc songs/responses?
- Helping one another in whatever we can, either in money, or giving communion to those who cannot join us in our parish.
- As a parish spirit leading through celebrating Sunday Masses spreading the good news of God. May the parish and priests in this church have a fruitful life and good health to serve and help people.
- Myself better communication with all the Parishioners.
- To serve and follow God.
- I think Mercy Parish is doing a very good job of including the friendship aspect that is so important and can never be too much. Ways of increasing this aspect need to be explored. I say this after visiting a Pentecostal Church.

- To love all we are very different in age so we must listen to the Spirit and to be aware of the needs other COVID make us careful but we must think of our people.
- Keep up the lovely friendliness, Mass Celebration important, reach out to the need in our local community, to involve our schools in more parts of the celebration
- Leading us to know and support each other at a deeper level than now. Names. Keep communicating the needs of people and how we can help and support each other.
- To be faith, love, servants.
- The spirit is preparing us for after life. As a church we build strength, trust and relationships to become more one as a parish.
- More involvement of all races, more social activities, festivals, concerts, bus trips, walking group, telephone groups. Links with elderly and single living alone people.
- I believe we need to bring back into our Basilica a profound reverence and respect for the Blessed Sacrament and the tabernacle currently it is not readily visible on entry and respect seems to have vanished. Loud talking before Mass commences – no time for others to quietly reflect or pray. When else to you get the opportunity.
- To engage more with our community especially through the work of SVDP and CSS (But not exclusively) Even creating greater awareness of the need and their work would be helpful in more ways than one.
- Good, respect. Respect people in your parish.
- We need to be more active in the Parish but as we age our energy levels drop. But we can pray for the young ones to take up the reins.
- To work towards including more of the community in active participation. Eg women in liturgy, variety of cultural groups.
- Find ways to include the wider South Dunedin Community eg. A lunch or soup evening, these ways we can support and encourage our young people.
- Have a parish luncheon before Easter and before Christmas – a community gathering even a sing song on St Patrick's Day.
- A visible witness of contemplative action for justice in the world. A lamp on a pedestal. An example Prayer/or silent witness for peace and the end of war in Ukraine.
- Leading keep moving and in the other
- We are mission a demographic – people 20-40 where are they? What can we do to bring them in?
- Outreach to those not attending Mass. I'd like to see more education/workshops open to all, on what it means to be a Catholic.
- As a parish we will be lead towards the good will.
- More welcoming at Masses parishioners with name and welcome attached. Follow up. The youth tell us what the Spirit is saying for them to do. So blessed to have Frs Gerard, Hook and Peter.
- Help each other, love one another, listen to each other.
- The responsibility to be part of the community. Leadership.
- More co-operation and support for each other and in the wider community. St Vincent de Paul, Night Shelter and other groups.

- To our Lord our Saviour and to all our families, Dad, Mum and our grandchildren, Grand Ma, Grand Pa, all the families and our communities, all the families back home in the Island God bless them all.
- We are doing very well.
- To be inclusive to care for those less fortunate.
- The spirit leads us as a parish to spread.
- Giving to all peoples, gathering together for fundraising and community events.
- I am unworthy to answer this question. Ahead of you a future unknown, a path un-trod, beside you a friend well known, that friend is God.
- To keep on providing Gods presence here in South Dunedin.
- When things are back to normal we could have some social events.
- I hope towards more inclusive services relating to everyone. Uplifting music, sermons more interesting. Historical facts from the bible “this Bible as history a very interesting read”.
- To be a peace making community. Start a catholic House in Dunedin.
- We need to take care of everyone in our parish – making sure that everyone is known and welcomed.
- To make us happy.
- Spirit leading us to our community and neighbours.
- To be good Catholics and servants to the community.
- Together, welcoming, accepting.
- I think the parish is doing this well. But to continue people stepping up, leading liturgies, preaching, looking into the community outside the parish who needs one.
- To show concern for others and avoid judgemental behaviour.
- Dialogue with Muslim community.
- Get modern, make mass interesting and relevant, and sing modern songs.
- The spirit is leading us towards spreading the good word of the Lord.
- The importance of implementing initiative to strengthen our community in this COVID impacted time, help reduce street, feelings of isolation and reduced hope.
- To the heavenly peace
- To contribute to a community that cares about general wellbeing not just individual wellbeing. To provide hope to those who have none.
- Giving us all nourishment for soul in this world and helping us to grow in holy spirit, this prepares for everlasting life in heaven under the guidance of the church.
- Leading us to God, Leading us to Love one another and working together. Leading us to believe in God the father, the Son, the Holy Spirit.
- Motivate young people.
- Glory to God in the highest.
- To be more vibrant in worship, To be light in darkness – prayerful, to form prayer groups. More exposition.
- More inclusive now especially as we have so many cultures present at Mass. Heartening to hear different cultures participating in readings, singing etc.

- We need to work together and develop good and loving relationships; we need to be open to change as the world is changing so we need to try new ways of worship to our God.
- To be good people that bear good fruit.
- Bringing everyone together as a believer in almighty.
- By being together and considerate to other we can show as a community how a parish can support each other.
- To continue as a community working together, all parishioners keeping our hearts and minds on God, through Jesus.
- Well, firstly I must say that I am new to this parish but from what I can sense there is a oneness in this community/parish. So, the spirit leading the parish to oneness.
- Spirit lead us as a 'parish', Heart, to be kind and compassionate. Be nice to people.
- Our heart.
- Holy Spirit leading us to heaven.
- I believe the Holy Spirit is leading us as a parish to Jesus Christ/God to reveal the mystery of the trinity.
- I don't know I personally am not feeling the Spirit.
- To brighten our future.
- Jesus thank you for your goodness.
- Home
- To be close to the heavenly father. To know that God is with us always.
- To say thanks to our God for every things he does for us all no matter what colour we are. We are all Golds, we pray for everyone. St Joseph pray for us
- Care for people in need, family support
- Maybe more youth involvement, try some reconciliation with groups that would have been hard in the past/present eg LGBT
- Lead us to spread good word of the Lord and generate the values to the humankind.
- Internal community building could look like this, formal weekly meet and greets, some interracial activities, A church project that we could all work together., a dedicated weekly prayer time (weekly) for world issues National disasters, Ukraine etc
- We need to reach out to other faith communities and share resources and skills.
- To have understanding acceptance of diversity.
- Who are we to those who don't feel that they would be accepted amongst us.
- To concentrate on the small things in life.
- To be with the Holy Spirit, to be of help to accomplish the above.
- Hope we should all be the same under Gods roof, no one should think they are any better than any other person.
- To develop parish leaders. To list to the voices and experiences of recent migrants.
- To be a caring community, to be 'one' inclusive
- United, more
- To openness of difference

- Outreach – especially at time of emergency, ie COVID, although diverse in nationality. Prayer. Addressing the abuse, always seems of concern and is hard to endure for victims, church and parish, not afraid to speak out and listen.
- I don't know it is a challenge. We have to believe and be strong in our belief.
- Reach out to other faith communities.
- The people to come praying to the Lord. Nobody should sin.
- To become more inclusive in language. Preaching by our lay men and women. Include ecumenical events.
- Difficult to say in this time of turmoil when division is in our Parish, Society and world. The words that come to mind are Unity, communication. Celebration.
- To present as a unified community not a separate group. ie Catholic as in universal not introverted.
- Leading us all for safety and love with others.
- Support one another.
- To continue to be people of service and praise. In our unity to shine – we are doing well.
- Spirit bring to heart of people have grateful devoted his/her faith.
- To people the people the people! To care for, greet, welcome to be a family of God. How? Group meetings for prayer, study, helping others.
- The biggest need in the parish is interpersonal connection. People are attached to the structure of the church but they are, overall, are not attached to each other. The passing of the peace becomes meaningless because we are not connected to each other enough to have anything to forgive.
- We have a wonderful parish community and we can build on it by selling of pockets of pray all around the parish.
- Having social events is very important for a parish to come together and get to know one another eg shared luncheons, picnics and our cuppa after Masses is always enjoyed by parishioners, but during this COVID time it is hard to organise events, it is wonderful we can still gather for Mass during these times.
- To reach out to wider community – free means, free transport to and from church. Food for schools.
- To be spiritually available to all people. Regardless of whether they appear to need us. To do what we can to relieve the physical burdens on people so that they can be free to be more open to God in their lives.
- To faithfully serve the Lord.
- Being part of a parish family and community, being kind and understanding, caring and more giving.
- To encounter people who can help us to see God in other Parish members.
- Perhaps every now and again sit next to somebody you don't know as Mass and introduce your self.
- Spirit leading us to be a good member of the parish which in turn lead us to be a good person, requires good participation of parish activities.
- The welcome to Mercy Parish needs to be very informative to parishioners and should be updated for anyone popping into the church.
- The spirit makes us work together as a parish.
- To include all those in South Dunedin in our worship and good works.

- To be a more personal community, need to take time to use each other's names, time to share with each other at Eucharist.
- Enlightenment and compassion for our neighbour's needs.
- Peace in the world, stop war overseas.
- We need more lay people helping out Fr Gerard has too much on his plate.
- More inclusive.
- I wait for the Lord, my soul waits for his word, I put my hope Ps130:3-5
- Leading us to pray together and care for each other.
- To be a community who cares about each other.
- To be more welcoming and patient to people who have different views from our self.
- Closer to God. Closer to understanding Gods mission.
- To be closer to other parishioners and communities.
- Towards inspiration and guidance to bond as one people of God and do good for all men.
- To be witness by how we care/minister/accept all people
- Back to the time and ways of Jesus as Pope Francis has said. "every sinner can be a saint and every saint can be a sinner E&OM. Less formality, more care of those who need care.
- To be inclusive, to be a resource, a place of solace, and a meeting place for the diverse community in which we are situated.
- To eternal life. The mass is the life blood of the Church and the Spirit and parish are one.
- Egs of care, sense of homecoming. Joy
- Leading where the Spirit
- Being like an extended family
- United in the love and care of each other, we are one in Jesus. Bless Gods Holy Name.
- I think we need to clean up our backyard first to progress. We need to acknowledge all those affected by sexual abuse by clergy
- As a parish we are relevant to the relevant people, however, our relevancy is the wider community within which we sit, is limited. The spirit will guide those to choose the way they see fit. All the PARISH can realistically do is to keep shining the light on the pathway so people who choose the way can find it.
- As a parish to be inclusive, respective and not judgemental.

## Appreciation

- Acknowledging the great work you do. Your reflections/homilies are always engaging and timely. The load you carry is heavy(to coin a biblical analogy) in terms of Diocesan as well Parish work(some thoughts on this below\*). Availability and manner are really appreciated.
- Sacramental work is really genuine and needed
- We must continue to support Pope F. His legacy must be continued and the Laity have to be enabled and empowered to lead#(see below)

## Diocesan

- In terms of resourcing and operations I don't doubt that you and the 'advisers' have this well in hand. BUT no members tithing, no certainty on pastoral work etc. So need to attend to 'membership' in concert with this.
- Well done on Paul Olsen's appointment. Paul has the experience and the intellectual capabilities to do the work. Nationally he is connected and alongside his strategic and operational skills he will do the work well, good co-leadership with terms of reference and transparency I hope.

## Parish, Pastoral & Educational

- This work is obvious and I see the future direction in terms of what I write in the next section including Environmental and Social Justice priorities in partnerships enabled and empowered by the 'leaders' with a profile and integrity. Ye old early Church Model please.
- Example - Lay involvement in meaningful liturgy - needs a plan, co-leadership, resourced and terms of reference so it is sustainable