

WALKING HUMBLY WITH OUR GOD

Feedback Session - Characteristics of a “Thriving Catholic Community” St Dunstan’s Parish

What we do well:

Evangelising

CaFE courses and Exploring our Faith session for Parishioner to meet up to study and discuss their faith. Mike Stythe’s Bible Study Group. Target Magazine medium for providing information about Parish events. Notices in Library advertising events. Attendance at Ecumenical services.

Serving and Ministering

Inner Healing Prayer Group
Friday coffee mornings for imparting information
Eucharistic Ministry

Visiting the sick and giving Holy Communion. We do this well mainly because of Sister Winifred. There is a bit of concern about what we would do if Sister Winifred wasn’t able to do such a fantastic job.

Welcoming

This is a real strength and we see ourselves as a friendly, welcoming community. Welcomers are at both doors on Sundays to greet people and hand out hymn books and newsletters. Children are made to feel an active part of our community. We are particularly strong at welcoming those with special needs and their parents. Non Catholics are welcomed and the community makes good use of our facilities. Excellent Parish fair which is well attended and supported by both parish and community - we are very much part of the Community of Bourne End. Church is open during the day. Those new to the Parish are welcomed. Those who appear or wish to be on their own are respected. Monthly coffee meetings after Mass provide opportunity for informal gatherings.

Celebrating

Music is strength – we alternate the music group with the organist to appeal to the different styles of music that the congregation enjoy. Parishioners undertake Readings and there are plenty of Eucharistic Ministers. Children very much involved.

Networking

We work well with St Teresa’s in Beaconsfield
Stations of the Cross with St Marks

Collaboration

Preparation of Holy Communion and Confirmation (with St Teresa's)

Networking

Stations of the Cross at St Marks

Women's Day of Prayer

Learning

Children's Liturgy very good and well attended

Preparation of Eucharistic Ministers

Praying

Inner Pray Group

Working for Justice

CAFOD

Mother Teresa

Kaoma

Keren Priests

Keren Schools

What we aspire to:**Celebrating**

Perhaps children could read at Mass

Networking

More connections between: schools and parishes, across parishes within the pastoral area and with young people.

We should try to attend more Ecumenical services.

Conversing

We should be kept more up to date about what is happening in the Parish and South Bucks pastoral area.

Effectiveness of Parish Forum – a two way process (ideas encouraged and expectations need expressing).

Website means of checking on parish news and information – blog site suggested.

We should remind people of everything that we do and everything that is done.

Note to be included in Target to let people know that St Dunstan's is open during the day for pray, contemplation and moments of peace and quiet.

Collaboration

More work to be done with schools and other parishes to maximise resources and ensure consistency across the pastoral area.

Schools should not be viewed as parish specific but a resource to the whole pastoral area. They should advertise parish events across the pastoral area (to attract families back to parish community and mass).

Governors should be representative of the pastoral area and not parish specific.

Need to share our Priests and locations of Masses

We should make an effort to make links with local non-catholic schools. Suggest rep. visit the schools to promote the church.

Praying

Recognition of the focal point of the Eucharist. A concern was expressed that those who go once a week to Mass on Sundays often chat when they meet up in the church and as they leave. This can be disturbing to those in prayer. Another view was expressed that church should not be too austere and off putting to people. Mass should be a time of celebrating and rejoicing.

We request for one minute silence before Mass to allow the congregation to prepare through personal/private prayer. Could we find another parish where they get the balance right that we can learn from?

Learning

Lots of opportunities and events but could they be held in the evenings.

Exercise Stewardship

Raising Finances – not as good as we should be. We should communicate more directly the costs of running the parish to the congregation.