



## Facilitated Event Summary

**Parish:** St. Teresa of Avila

**Date:** 25<sup>th</sup> June 2012

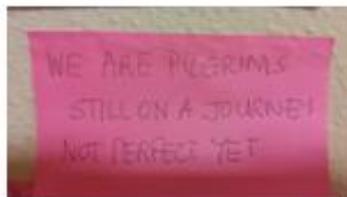
**Venue:** Parish Centre

### Introduction and Purpose:

On Monday 25<sup>th</sup> June at 7 p.m. a group of around 20 parishioners and clergy gathered in St. Teresa's Parish Centre as part of an ongoing process looking at the formation of a Parish Pastoral Council in St. Teresa's Parish. This was the second in a series of Living Church facilitated sessions and follows on from previous work including:

Our  
Discernment  
So Far

- Pat Hill's May Evenings 2010
- Listening Event- 8<sup>th</sup> March 2011
- Vicariate Event 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2012
- First Session in St. Teresa's 11<sup>th</sup> June 2012



## **A Praying Discerning Community**

We began the evening with a period of prayer using the Ignatian 'Examen' as a way of 'arriving' at the session and looking back on the day for God's presence in our lives. We continued our prayer using a reading from the Gospel of Luke (Lk9: 10-17):



**"He welcomed them and taught them about the Kingdom of God, and he healed those who were sick. Late in the afternoon the twelve disciples came to him and said, "Send the crowds away to the nearby villages and farms, so they can find food and lodging for the night. There is nothing to eat here in this lonely place." But Jesus said, "You feed them yourselves."**

**"But we have only five loaves of bread and two fish," they answered. "Or are you expecting us to go and buy enough food for this whole crowd?" For there were about 5,000 men there.**

**Jesus replied, "Tell them to sit down in groups of about fifty each." So the people all sat down. Jesus took the five loaves and two fish, looked up toward heaven, and blessed them. Then, breaking the loaves into pieces, he kept giving the bread and fish to the disciples so they could distribute it to the people. They all ate as much as they wanted, and afterward, the disciples picked up twelve baskets of leftovers."**



After a period of reflection on this reading, we set and agreed the purpose of the evening as follows:

- To gather together as a community in prayer**
- To review the outcomes from our First Session**
- To consider in more depth the work of a Pastoral Council**

We acknowledged that not everyone would go to every meeting that we would hold and that it was ok for people to come to some or all of the meetings. We also agreed that we will keep all the feedback from our work as we go along and this information, in turn, will be of help to the Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) which is formed at the end of this process.

### **Review of Last Session**

We then looked back at our last session (11<sup>th</sup> June 2012) and the work that the group did on that night. This was a useful exercise, especially so because there were people present tonight who had not been at the first meeting.

We reminded ourselves of what we had agreed a PPC was:

A group of committed people of God (Priest, religious and lay people) called upon to **investigate** pastoral matters, **reflect** on them thoroughly and **recommend** practical conclusions

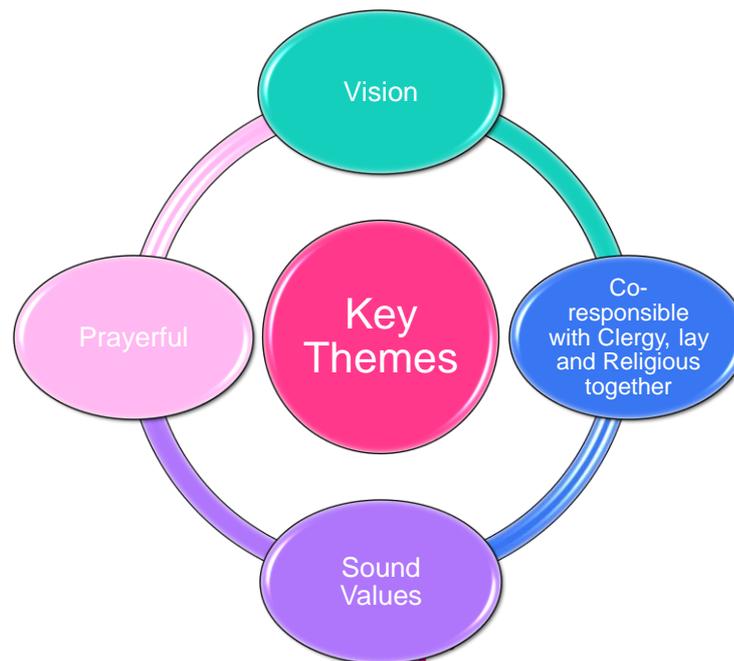
Priest acknowledges the wisdom of the Parishioners and expresses his desire to share with them his responsibility for the governance of the Parish

Set Pastoral Themes for the Parish- everything to do with the life of the Parish can be discussed



We also revisited the outcome of our exercise on the last night, where we reflected on what would make for a successful PPC. We concluded that night that it would be based on the following themes:

## A Successful Council



We took some time to answer some of the questions that came up from the previous night and some questions our group tonight had also. This was a useful task to complete and it provided a good basis for us to move on to our first task of the evening.

## Exercise

The purpose of this exercise was to gain more insight into what a Pastoral Council would actually do in our Parish. After breaking into small groups we set the groups the following task:

**In your group consider what areas the Pastoral Council will prioritise in their Pastoral Plan for the Parish.**

We encouraged the groups to have a period of 'privileged' listening where each person could say what they felt should be in the Pastoral Plan, before distilling these ideas down to 4 from each group.

We also let the groups know that these ideas were not a definitive Pastoral Plan for our Parish, rather a way for us to begin to elicit the themes we thought the Council would look at.

The groups worked hard and came back with a round 20 ideas. We then worked as a large group to bring ideas together into themes:



Having completed this exercise, we went on to look at some other ideas of what areas a PPC could focus on. This work came from a book called, Parish Pastoral Councils: A Formation Manual (Snoddy, McNally and Campbell). They suggest the following areas:

- Worship
- Community Building
- Education and Formation
- Social Outreach

The group also looked at the areas of Living Church as possible themes to provide focus for a PPC's work. In doing this, we agreed that the work we had done together in our groups showed that we were thinking in similar ways to other people tasked with developing PPC's. This was heartening to the group who expressed that they had learned a lot about the work of a PPC this evening.

## **Conclusions**

As the evening drew to a close we heard questions from the group about the roles and functions of the various people on the PPC. We agreed that we could not answer those questions in full this evening but that we would dedicate time to this and other issues as we go forward. Further to this we also agreed the following:

- We will meet on 9<sup>th</sup> July to look at roles and functions of PPC members
- We will begin on time at 7 and try to keep our prayer time and recap time to 20 minutes
- We will then meet from August to look at: Qualities and Skills; Selecting the Council

There was a sense that we are moving at a good pace that was slow enough for all to get involved and develop understanding. Yet it was sufficiently paced to keep the momentum going.

Jim Deeds, Living Church, 25<sup>th</sup> June 2012