



YOUR QUESTIONS, ANSWERED

Dec 8, 2022

On the feedback questionnaire from Nov 19 Parish Alive Launch event and Leadership Training, everyone was invited to send in their questions. Thank you for taking the time to do this and below please find all the questions submitted and their answers.

Question 1:

Comment - Feel the sessions were too long...One cannot concentrate for so long without a break.

ANSWER:

We agree that the sessions were long and thank you for working with the tight agenda. When we originally planned the event, it was much longer. But after much consideration it was decided to make the programme of the day short and intense which was thought to be the best way to impart as much information to everyone as possible in the most effective way. From the overwhelmingly positive feedback, and with everyone's cooperation, we accomplished that well.

Question 2:

I am a new member to the PPC and would appreciate more engagements of this nature to ensure our actions are aligned to the expectations of a PPC as prescribed by the Church. Would this be possible?

ANSWER:

We plan to set up webinars where various topics of the Parish Alive initiative can be discussed. These will begin early in 2023. This will be an opportunity for the various leaders to ask questions and relate their experiences so we can all learn from each other.

These webinars will cover two sections of the Parish Alive initiative:

1. The 6 activities of the Missionary Mandate in action. (1-Become an invitational, welcoming church. 2-Conduct introductory programmes to the Christian faith. 3- Set up Small Christian Communities. 4-Set up ongoing faith formation programmes. 5- Worship. 6- Service ministries.)
2. The 5 organisational pillars (1-Vision 2- Structure 3- Strategy 4- Culture 5- Leadership.)

Each webinar will cover one of these elements.

Information will also be posted on the Website and on social media.

Question 3:

How would an individual approach an elder in the church especially when racially and aging isn't suited for them

ANSWER:

Certainly, respect is called for concerning elders in the church community. When it comes to younger parishioners getting involved and introducing new initiatives in the parish, this won't always be appreciated by elders, but elders can be helped to understand that all parishioners have received gifts for the building up of the parish community, and these gifts should be welcomed and appreciated. As disciples of Jesus we shouldn't be concerned about holding onto power; rather we are a serving community. Nonetheless, change is difficult, perhaps particularly for those who are elders, and every effort should be made not to alienate them or any other groups in the parish.

Question 4

What do we do if the parish priest and deacon are not on board with what and how we should implement the content?

ANSWER:

There is no doubt that the support of the parish priest (and deacon) is a vital factor in parish renewal. It may be that a parish priest has not read the new PPC Statutes of the Archdiocese, and who has either preferred to not attend the training sessions and read the associated material, or it has passed them by. Try speaking to your parish priest explaining the importance of this new approach, and that it is the recommended way to implement the new PPC Statutes, which in turn are an implementation of the Bishops' Pastoral Plan. If all else fails, there are still significant things PPC Members can do in terms of creating an inviting and welcoming parish and being encouraging and supportive of those in ministry in the parish. There will be opportunities for PPC Members to engage with others from other parishes, in their portfolios, and support will be given by the archdiocesan portfolio leaders.

Question 5:

It was mentioned that the Parish Priest should not have a portfolio but we feel that because our priest is the marriage and family go to person in the Archdiocese, he needs to handle that portfolio, he does not have a problem with it. Is this allowed?

ANSWER:

While the parish priest may be the main go-to person in the parish and perhaps in the Archdiocese, there is still merit in having a married person and a team of married persons heading up this portfolio in the parish. The parish priest will benefit from the support of this team in his overall parish ministry, and parishioners will be better served by a team working in conjunction with the parish priest.

Question 6:

As a new PPC, we may not all have knowledge of the duties and responsibilities of each ministry...a short description thereof would be appreciated.

ANSWER:

The Parish Alive Handbook covers detail pertaining to the roles and responsibilities of each portfolio. This handbook is available on the Archdiocesan website. In addition, the webinars we plan to set up will answer any other questions, and allow for the sharing of experiences, successes, and failures. Information will also be posted on the Website and on in social media.

Question 7:

Are there online resources for parish councils and development of sub-committees?

ANSWER:

We are working on various resources and platforms to keep the programme alive for all concerned and will share them online.

Question 8:

Why did an industrial psychologist present a corporate strategy, rather than a member of the clergy present an evangelization strategy? We are a Church with some corporate attributes, not a corporate with church attributes.

ANSWER:

The simple answer is that both are needed. Priests need to be tireless in their preaching and efforts at evangelization. All the same, the responsibility for evangelization is not solely the clergy's; all the baptized are commissioned to evangelize. This means that lay men and women can bring the best practice in their areas of specialization to the Church. An industrial psychologist can bring an understanding of optimal organization structure to the parish, a professional teacher can bring the best practice in education to the teaching of catechism and faith formation, a design and marketing specialist can bring their skills to the social media and communication needs of the parish, etc. It should also be noted that within the whole strategy, there needs to be a specific and prioritized strategy for evangelization. In fact, it could be said that everything about this programme is essentially aimed at facilitating evangelization.

Question 9:

Not all Parish Priests are the same and Parish alive was introduced to our first PPC meeting. Our Parish Priest and Deacon are not so positive and will not support the way forward. Only focused on Evangelization and Youth. Shouldn't we follow the Archdiocesan Programmes as given to us to the parish level?

ANSWER:

It is true that the support of parish priests (and deacons) will make a huge difference in the implementation of this programme. It may take them time to come onboard, and respectful interaction with them can help them to see the merits of this programme. That said, if they are focused on Evangelization and Youth already, that is a huge step forward.

Question 10:

Will there be workshops for the different portfolios or must it be organized at Parish level?

ANSWER:

Please see question 2 above for the answer.

Question 11:

Who do I contact for help as regards Evangelisation?

ANSWER:

The leader of the Evangelization portfolio at the archdiocesan level (Fr Zane) will be in contact with all the Evangelization portfolio leaders on the different PPCs, this month. Support, resources, training will be arranged and possibilities to network and collaborate will be facilitated.

Question 12:

Haven't received the questionnaire for a parish culture survey document, are they available yet?

ANSWER:

This is being sent out the week of 5 December to all Parish Priests and PPC Chairs that we have the contact details for. It is best to follow up with them.

Question 13:

I missed the lack of mention social media as a way of evangelising. This is a tool we need to use and to use more effectivity especially among the younger generation. What are our parish social media strategies? I am still waiting on to see news of this event circulate on social media. Archbishop Stephen Brislin's talk at the training day was posted on facebook, but as yet no photos or short snippets to read! Yes, the 500 plus participants were very excited but to bring this excitement to parish level is a challenge.

ANSWER:

Communication including social communications is extremely important in reaching everyone and particularly on the platforms where the youth are engaged today. Parish Alive is actively working on aligning resources and laying the support structures and communications foundations on which to build this future. If there are people in our parishes who wish to become more involved in this initiative, please contact PARISH ALIVE.

Question 14:

If we could have maybe follow-up meeting with the PPC Team, just to see how things are going and where we stand at.

ANSWER:

Please see Question 2 for the answer.

Parishes should arrange their own follow up meetings

Question 15:

Will there be a training for a specific position in the PPC

ANSWER:

Please see Question 2 for the answer.

Question 16:

Will each portfolio holder have a guideline of what is expected

ANSWER:

See Question 6 for the answer.

Question 17:

More of a suggestion: Have a PPC summit once or twice a year to:

- 1. Measure progress, success and 'failures',**
- 2. It is good for Archdiocese community building,**
- 3. PPC's can learn from each other, know that we all here for each other,**
- 4. We are Church, the spin off's of this inter-diocese collaboration for inter-parish events is enormous.**
- 5. There is just so much good we can do together!
We ask this in prayer!**

ANSWER:

A very good suggestion. A yearly Parish Alive summit is something we can investigate and if the feeling for this is positive we can definitely set this up.

Question 18:

Could you please send me the link for the parish culture survey?

ANSWER:

See Question 12 for the answer

Question 19:

At our PPC meeting this week we realized that the care for the physical structure of the parish was not included in the plan yet it is very important, especially in the light of the 10 year maintenance plan required of us. Since this is, in practice, always evolving, should this not find its way into the vision too?

ANSWER:

This is a good comment. It is mentioned on page 34 of the handbook. Maintenance could fit into the Parish Community Building Portfolio. Or a new portfolio called Parish Administration could be established. This could include: The Parish office; Maintenance of buildings and grounds; Fundraising etc. This is a question each parish should decide on depending on what suits their circumstances the best.

Question 20:

Please can you send the contact details to PPC chair of the corresponding portfolios at the chancery?

ANSWER:

This will be shared to all PPC members, we are in the process of updating our database to ensure everyone receives this information.

Question 21:

What is happening with the Liturgical Commission and who is the contact person

ANSWER:

At this stage the Liturgical Commission has yet to be reconstituted. This will be considered early in the new year, taking into account the network of Liturgy portfolio leaders in the different parishes.

Question 22:

Once the Vision is completed, would there be supportive assessment about the impact thereof?

ANSWER:

The **PPC survey** (for the PPC only) which we will soon be available on the Archdiocesan website covers the 5 organisational pillars which includes Vision. This survey is completed by the PPC members. This survey will give good insights into how well the PPC members believe the PPC is operating.

The **Parish Culture Survey** (for all parishioners) which we suggest each parish conducts yearly will provide a very good platform for self assessment of many aspects of the Parish Alive initiative. This survey covers the 7 portfolios and is completed by the parishioners.

Question 23:

Will there be events held for PPC portfolio leaders for each portfolio in the future? More specifically, ideas, strategies etc given that each parish could try to implement or see if it will work for their parishes?

ANSWER:

See Question 2 for the answer.

Question 24:

As a new PPC, I would like to establish what ministerial programmes/training are being offered by the Archdiocese

ANSWER:

The various liturgical ministries will each have training materials available online. Each ministry will also have a training day in 2023 equipping coordinators to run trainings at their parishes on an ongoing basis. These dates will all be on the website and communicated closer to the time.

Question 25:

**In the STATUTES FOR PARISH PASTORAL COUNCILS explanation at the beginning of Nick's presentation the following was omitted:
Section 4 –MEMBERSHIP OF THE PPC One representative of each religious order or secular institute based in the parish.**

ANSWER:

It is true that representation of religious orders or secular institutes on PPCs was not covered. This will be covered at a later stage, but at this stage it is assumed that those persons will most likely be already represented in terms of being portfolio leaders on the parish PPCs

Question 26:

Dietary Requirements were requested but were not catered for. Diabetics had a challenge

ANSWER:

In our understanding, diabetes (the type was not indicated) does not equal to sugar free and the items could have been managed accordingly.
