



St. Patrick's R.C. Church
A CHURCH IN THE MAKING

PARISH CONSULTATION REPORT



ⓧ    **StPatricksBR**

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A CATHOLIC COMMUNITY SINCE 1830

Dear Parishioners of St Patrick's,

I write as an update and a pledge to you following our Parish Survey, which we asked you to take the time to do earlier in the Fall. It is my hope that Fr Fraser and myself, our Staff and all who are responsible for leading ministries here in the parish, will continue to hear from you so that we know how best to meet your needs and respond to your ideas and suggestions. Thank you for all that each of you do to make this such a wonderful parish.

Thank you! to those of you who took the time to answer our Survey. A copy was placed in each bulletin, and one was given to each family who have a child involved in Sacramental Preparation this year. We received 113 responses, the vast majority of which came from parents of children in Sacramental Prep: (88 out of 98 families preparing their child/ren for one of the Sacraments). To put it another way, we received a mere 25 responses from parishioners who do not have children in Sacramental preparation. The feedback has been helpful, and we received a number of ideas and suggestions.

Some recommendations are already being implemented:

- we have commenced the emailing of our parish bulletin to the school administration each week, with a number of copies of the bulleting being left in the school office for parents each week, and a copy for every student being sent home after the first Sunday of each month;
- using the bulletin to inform parents of the celebration of Masses in our schools, and of other school information as communicated by the school to us.

Among of your suggestions will start in February, including:

- increased availability for Confession: in addition to each Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. and Saturday at 4:00 p.m., we will now celebrate the Sacrament of Confession each first Friday from 7:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m., each Saturday from 8:30 a.m. – 8:50 a.m., and on a trial basis, each Sunday from 12:30 p.m. to before the 1:00 p.m. Mass;
- Rosary via conference call; watch the bulletin for details
- hymn numbers on a board at the front before each Mass; the hymn board is on order and therefore we can look forward to more of you singing each week!

Other ideas and suggestions will be implemented as your participation allows, as doing these requires additional volunteers, training and preparation.

- Having a family bring up the gifts during Mass. Ensuring we are able to do this effectively and consistently *will require* that we have more ushers and that families/couples/groups be willing to assist; again, please watch for a sign-up sheet

for volunteers who would like to assist as an usher and we can meet to discuss the light duties and responsibilities before the end of January.

- Request for more social opportunities to come together and to enjoy conversation without cost or obligation. We can easily put together one or two “coffee Sundays” per month after each Sunday Mass. Of course, ***we will need volunteers*** to prepare coffee and light snacks, and to ensure clean-up and readiness of the Parish Hall at the Masses which offer the Children’s Liturgy. We will put out a call for a new Social Committee. Help us by signing up! Watch for that in the New Year.
- A greater variety of music and hymns. We are grateful for our musicians and choir members, for their dedication and generosity. ***You are invited to add your skills, musical talents and voices*** to make our choirs and music ministry even better!
- Opportunities for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament: early in the new year, we will offer you the chance to let us know what time/s your schedule would allow for Adoration. If we can get enough people to guarantee presence at each scheduled time of Adoration, we will happily do so.
- A number of women asked for opportunities to come together to share their faith, their struggles and their joys; we will ask you when and how to make this happen;
- Some people asked for Faith Discussion opportunities; again, we will be canvassing you in the new year to see when and how to make this happen.

And there are some wishes that are best not accommodated

- The schedule and demands on us priests and Ken after each Sunday Mass do not allow us to take Mass intentions in the sacristy after Sunday Masses. Kindly continue to call or visit the parish office;
- opening the back door during Masses (for access to restrooms). With the Children’s Liturgy downstairs, security and safety concerns suggest things stay as they are.

A note about homilies: thank you for expressing your appreciation for the homilies here, and for your comments and suggestions. Know that Fr Fraser and I consider preaching as a great responsibility, both a duty and a privilege. Ensuring that you are given solid, faithful, spiritually uplifting and challenging homilies is no easy task, and that the vast majority of respondents see and value our efforts is gratifying.

There was the observation that I tend to speak too fast: I promise to try and slow down. Please continue to remind me. I mean that!

A homily cannot address everyone, at every age and stage and situation in life. The best preparation – for homilist and parishioner alike – for getting much more out of reflection

on the Sunday readings, is *actual preparation*. What time do you spend preparing – alone? With your spouse? With your children? – for Sunday Mass throughout the week? What time do you spend afterwards? Life is busy; that’s true for all of us. And yet “ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ”: each of us *must* give some time to God outside of Mass and with His Scripture, wherein He reveals Himself to us. Doing so will enable parents to bring together your own reflections, along with that of the homilist, to make them understandable to your children, whom you know best.

One sad observation is that, for most of us, it would appear that the Sacrament of Reconciliation is considered as “not applicable or not necessary to me”. Knowing people’s struggles and joys, seeing God at work in your lives, and guiding souls: this is a large part of the priest’s role, and a fruit of a busy confessional. Please consider how sharing your spiritual life, under the utterly confidential and inviolable seal of the confessional, might be a means both for your growth spiritually and as an aid in personal and parish conversion.

Our parish, like the world at large, is in need of renewal; we can no longer afford to coast on the remains of past gains. Each of you has the right to expect that your parish does everything it can to welcome and serve you, and to meet your legitimate needs. This begins with your parish priests, office staff, and volunteers. Know how much Fr Fraser and I value your continued input, advice and suggestions, and how rewarding it is for us to know and serve you, your families and loved ones, and all who come here. Each of us also has the right to expect welcome, kindness and service from one another, as brothers and sisters in the Lord. And we have the duty to serve our parish and community: "As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God’s varied grace" (1 Pet 4:10). Kindly review the enclosed form and see where the Lord is calling you to give as generously as you have received.

Know how committed Fr Fraser and I, and our staff and volunteers, to continuing to listen to you, to address your needs and implement your considered suggestions and ideas, so that our parish flourishes and together “until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ” (I Eph. 4:13).

With prayers and every grace and blessing to you and your loved ones,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Fr Fraser". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.