



Diocese of Brentwood

Stewards of the Gospel

Parish Questionnaire



Stewards of the Gospel – Parish Questionnaire



This questionnaire provides a framework for each parish community in the Diocese to explore its vitality and future direction. The prayer, consultation and reflection that lead to your responses are of central importance to this whole process; the questionnaire is simply the document for systematically recording the outcomes of your deliberations.

The Questionnaire

The questionnaire is presented in 3 parts.

Part A – *A Picture of Our Community* – provides the opportunity to gather, explore and present facts and figures about a wide range of facets of parish life.

Part B – *Reflective Questions* – key questions under 10 main headings for open discussion by your parish community, and the opportunity to highlight existing good practice.

Part C – *Our Community's Initial Thoughts and Ideas about the Future* – where your parish community is asked to provide its first thoughts about how it might move forward.

Ultimately, we would like all parishes to provide their final responses using an on-line questionnaire, as this will allow us to collate and analyse responses efficiently – and we will be providing information later in the year about how to do this. However, while drafting and sharing your responses within the parish, you may find that the electronic version of the questionnaire proves to be the best way of recording and storing your responses. The e-version of this document is available to download under “resources” on the diocesan website, www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/departments/evangelisation.

Please get in touch if you have any questions or if you have any comments or suggestions to make.

The DSPG Steering Group: Fr Tom Saunders, Fr Andrew Headon and Ms Adele Angel can be contacted at dspg@dioceseofbrentwood.org

Background Details

Name of parish:

Our Lady of Lourdes, Wanstead

Details of church(es) in the parish:

Church name	Church address
Our Lady of Lourdes	51 Cambridge Park, Wanstead , London E11 2PR

Key parish contacts:

Priest(s)	Permanent Deacon(s)	Steward of the Gospel
Canon Patrick J Sammon		Anne Marie Fox

Details of main contact for this questionnaire:

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Email Address:	annemariefox@btinternet.com	

Part A – A Picture of Our Community

Our Lady of Lourdes, Wanstead

Part A of the questionnaire takes respondents through the 10 main headings and requests detailed responses to a number of factual questions under each.

1 The Christian Faithful

1.1 Please complete the grids below to indicate how the number of those worshipping in your parish community has changed since 1985.

Mass attendance

1985	1990	1995	2000	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
1997	1800	1800	1100	1317	1309	1377	1419	1298	1240	1397	1400	1513	1503

Baptisms

1985	1990	1995	2000	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
81	54	69	79	74	90	97	118	98	105	91	119	97	97

Confirmations

1985	1990	1995	2000	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
58	27	37	77	42	31	41	25	34	16	14	38	27	42

Marriages

1985	1990	1995	2000	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
25	30	23	19	13	17	19	11	10	19	16	22	19	19

Receptions

1985	1990	1995	2000	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
4	7	7	9	12	10	11	6	7	13	11	9	11	13

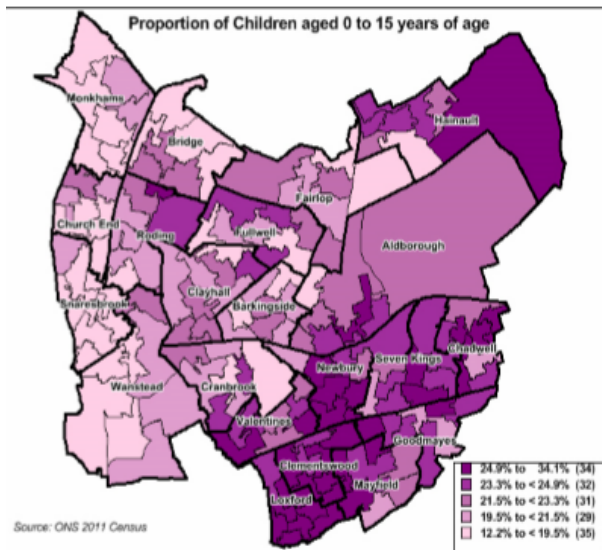
- 1.2 Are you aware of any significant demographic changes (e.g. a large increase / decrease in the overall population, an increase in the number of immigrants etc.) in your local area in the last 10 years that have impacted / will impact on your parish?

☒ Yes ☐ No

- 1.3 If Yes, please give a brief description of the changes and their impact on your parish community.

Brief description of change	Impact or potential impact
Impression is that the Wanstead area has become more affluent, due to house prices and the effect of East London in general becoming gentrified. The area has also become more ethnically diverse.	If it is correct that an appreciable proportion of the parish community in Wanstead comprises people who have moved from overseas in the past 5-10 years, from Catholic areas (such as Poland or parts of Nigeria, for example), or from adjacent areas in East London, this population group may fall if the area becomes too expensive to rent or buy in.
Population growth has been relatively low compared to that in Redbridge as a whole. Census statistics show that although the Redbridge population grew by 17% between 2001 and 2011, Wanstead grew by only 0.3%.	Wanstead is unlikely to experience overall population growth and therefore the area will be stable with regard to overall numbers of people living here, though not the age, social and ethnic mix.
Based on 2011 census data, Wanstead has a relatively low child population compared to Redbridge, but a high proportion of older people.	Given that Wanstead has a high proportion of older people, many of whom may have moved here when property and rents were less expensive, and when church-going was more common, it could be expected that the active Catholic parish community may shrink as this generation passes on. However, balanced against this would be a possible trend whereby families replace the older population, and these families may have an interest in being part of the Catholic community and its schools.
Change of boundary for Catholic secondary schools	This has resulted in a lot of parents moving out of the Wanstead area to try to ensure that their children will be in the catchment area for Trinity Catholic High School.

Please see maps and figures on next page

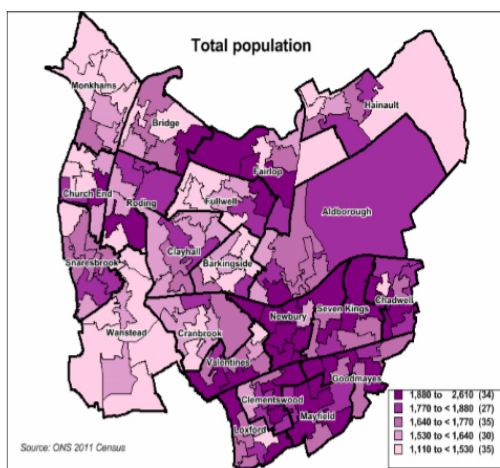


Total population

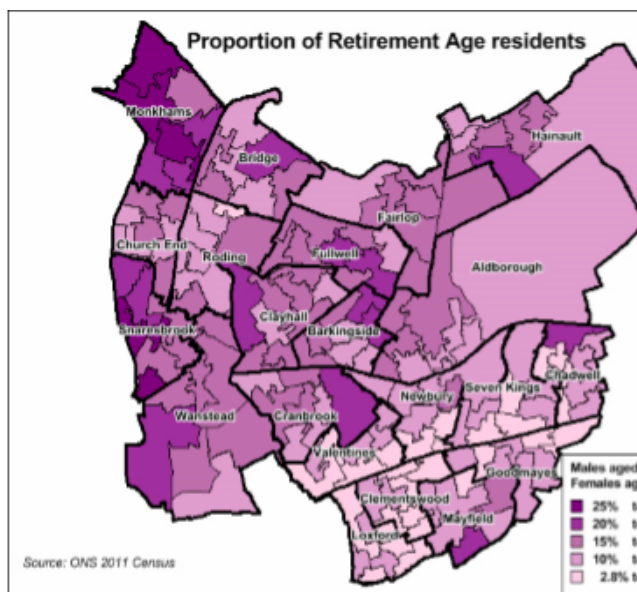
The Redbridge population was 278,970, an increase of 17% since 2001.

Redbridge has a higher growth rate than the London average - every ward in Redbridge recorded some growth between the censuses. Clementswood had the highest growth rate, followed by Chadwell, Newbury and Seven Kings. Wanstead had by far the lowest growth rate. The table to the right provides a breakdown of the change in each ward.

The map below shows the total population in Redbridge at lower super output area (LSOA) level.



Ward	2001	2011	Change
Aldborough	11,611	14,544	25.3%
Barkingside	11,303	12,609	11.6%
Bridge	11,211	11,658	4.0%
Chadwell	11,030	14,257	29.3%
Church End	9,997	11,516	15.2%
Clayhall	11,855	13,241	11.7%
Clementswood	11,286	14,666	29.9%
Cranbrook	11,858	12,780	7.8%
Fairlop	10,420	12,630	21.2%
Fullwell	11,269	12,910	14.6%
Goodmayes	10,994	13,069	18.9%
Hainault	11,367	12,953	14.0%
Loxford	13,585	16,544	21.8%
Mayfield	11,226	13,672	21.8%
Monkhams	9,866	10,422	5.6%
Newbury	13,074	16,760	28.2%
Roding	10,770	12,044	11.8%
Seven Kings	11,910	15,164	27.3%
Snaresbrook	10,854	11,865	9.3%
Valentines	11,643	14,123	21.3%
Wanstead	11,506	11,543	0.3%
REDBRIDGE			
AVERAGE	11,364	13,284	16.9%
LONDON WARD			
AVERAGE	11,482	13,087	14.0%



- 1.4 Are you aware of other significant changes in the local area that are impacting / likely to impact upon your parish? (Examples could include: major housing developments, the closure of a large employer, the development of a new industrial estate, an increase in youth unemployment etc.)

☒ Yes ☐ No

- 1.5 If Yes, please provide a brief description of the changes and their impact / potential impact on your parish community as far as you are able.

Brief description of change	Impact or potential impact
<p>Draft plans published by the London Borough of Redbridge* show that no major housing or industrial developments are planned for Wanstead itself.</p> <p>However, there are however planned developments in adjacent South Woodford and Gants Hill, and Crossrail may have an impact, although this is more likely in Ilford and Manor Park than in Wanstead itself.</p> <p>* Redbridge Local Plan 2015 -2030 Pre-submission draft for Neighbourhood Services Committee 26th May 2016.</p> <p><i>Extracts from plan (page 18)</i></p> <p>Directing growth to the borough's Investment and Growth Areas of Ilford, the Crossrail Corridor, Gants Hill, South Woodford and Barkingside will deliver successful thriving places, energy efficient housing, a dynamic economy and community services. Accelerated housing delivery as part of the Ilford Housing Zone and the arrival of Crossrail will help promote Redbridge as an attractive, well connected location in London. Housing developments are planned in Gants Hill and South Woodford.</p>	<p>Housing developments planned in Gants Hill and South Woodford may affect the Wanstead parish community, depending future demand for Catholic school places and plans made for the parishes that currently include Gants Hill and South Woodford.</p> <p>Similarly, Crossrail may lead to population growth in Ilford, which could have an impact on people wishing to come to services and schools in Wanstead, if there is shortage of provision in Ilford/Manor Park.</p>

- 1.6 Based on the most recent reported average mass attendance for your parish please give an ***approximate*** age breakdown using the categories below.

Age range	Approximate number
0-10	300
11-18	200
19-25	150
26-49	150
50-70	300
Over 70	400
TOTAL	1500

2 Leadership

- 2.1 Please provide details about the **leadership roles** in your parish community (e.g. Permanent Deacons, Lay Leaders, Chair of Parish Pastoral Council, SVP President, Chair of Finance Committee, Head Teacher, Chair of Governors, Music Group Leader etc.)
Please provide approximate numbers where possible.

Role	Number
Permanent Deacons	0
Pastoral Assistants: Frank Adesegeha, Terry Chimes, Carmel Docherty, Clare Losty,	4
Catechetical and Youth Co-ordinator (new person due to be appointed)	1
Chair of Parish Pastoral Council [Kate Watson]	1
Chair of Finance Committee [Christine Glover]	1
SVP President [Don O'Driscoll]	1
RCIA - Marie Francis	1
Instruction for Children at non-Catholic schools: Sister Veronica Ann (Assumption Order)	1
Baptism courses team includes Christine Glover and others	1
Confirmation [Kay Downie]	1
Marriage [Sara Walsh]	1
Master of Ceremonies [Paul Millen] (responsible for training of altar servers)	1
Ministry of Holy Communion [Kai Van Beers]	1
Ministry of the Word [Paul Godin]	1
Children's Liturgy [Rebecca McKelvey]	1
Life in the Spirit [Tara Fallon]	1
Offertory – Collection (John Scanlon)	1
Offertory – Counting / Banking (John Scanlon/Carmel Docherty)	2
Welcomers [Debra Selner]	1
Flowers [Evelyn Guyanon]	1
Divine Mercy Group [Shirley Beckford]	
Knights of St Columba [Andrew Burns]	1
Senior choir [Roderick Sime]	1
Junior Choir [Veronique Littlewood/ Raphaela Derrick]	2
Cleaners [Joan Farrelly]	1
Come and Sing [Jane Smith]	1

Role	Number
Bereavement Group [Sr Catherine Mercy Convent]	1
Prayer and Reflection Group [Peter Reilly]	
Under fives / Mother and Toddlers group [Georgie Chambury Burke]	1
Social Committee [Carol McLelland]	
Padre Pio Group [Cathy Francis]	1
Sheila Lovell Social Club [Carmel Docherty]	1
CAFOD [Pat Pugh]	1
Poetry Group [Jean Carberry]	1
Our Lady of Lourdes RC Primary School – Chair of Governors [Greg Eglin]	1
Our Lady of Lourdes RC Primary School – Headteacher [Edward Cottle]	1
Meditation Group – Maureen Brazier	1

2.2 Please describe the situation in your community regarding a Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) or equivalent group.

- ☐ No PPC or equivalent is in place (*Go to Question 2.11*)
- ☐ A PPC or equivalent is in place but is having little or no impact on the parish community
- ☒ A PPC or equivalent is in place and is having a significant impact on the parish community

2.3 Where a PPC or equivalent is in place, please indicate the year that it was established.

2000

2.4 Where a PPC or equivalent is in place, does it have a written constitution?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

2.5 Where a PPC or equivalent is in place, how frequently does it meet?

- | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Monthly | Every
2 months | Every
4 months | Every
6 months | Annually | Other |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

If other, please specify

Quarterly and as required

2.6 What is the process for setting the agenda for the PPC or equivalent?

- ☐ The agenda is agreed at the beginning of the meeting
- ☐ The agenda is set at the previous meeting
- ☒ The chair seeks items in advance
- ☐ The chair determines the agenda
- ☐ There is a standard agenda for every meeting

2.7 Who chairs the PPC or equivalent?

- ☐ Priest
- ☐ Deacon
- ☒ Lay person
- ☐ Religious

2.8 How are people in the parish informed about the membership and work of the PPC or equivalent?

Via the newsletter. Minutes available. Information about membership is displayed in Church entrance.

2.9 Which parish (es) is / are represented on the PPC or equivalent?

Our Lady of Lourdes, Wanstead, only.

2.10 What is the number and approximate age profile of members?

Age range	Number
Under 40	3
40 -70	9
Over 70	0
TOTAL	12

2.11 Is there a Finance Committee in place in the parish?

☒ Yes ☐ No

2.12 If Yes, how frequently does it meet?

Monthly Every 2 months Every 4 months Every 6 months Annually Other

☐ ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐ ☐

If other, please specify

2.13 What is the process for setting the agenda for the Finance Committee?

- ☐ The agenda is agreed at the beginning of the meeting
- ☐ The agenda is set at the previous meeting
- ☒ The chair seeks items in advance
- ☐ The chair determines the agenda
- ☐ There is a standard agenda for every meeting

2.14 Who chairs the Finance Committee?

Priest Deacon Lay Person Religious

☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

- 2.15 How are people in the parish informed about the membership and work of the Finance Committee?

Newsletter and announcements at Mass.

website

- 2.16 What is the number and approximate age profile of members?

Age range	Number
Under 40	
40 -70	5
Over 70	
TOTAL	5

3 Active Involvement of People

- 3.1 How many people in your parish community are registered for ministries that were subject to DBS (formerly CRB) checks in 2015?

280

- 3.2 How does this compare with the position in 2010?

The position is similar

- 3.3 Are there any paid workers for your parish community?

☒ Yes ☐ No

If Yes, please provide details below.

Role Title	Number	Total hours contracted per week
Youth Co-ordinator	1	39
Caretaker / cleaning and maintenance	1	7.5
Finance Secretary	1	7

- 3.4 Please indicate approximately how many lay people in your parish, in the age categories shown, are involved with delivering parish / deanery programmes.

Role	Under 40	40 - 70	Over 70	Total
Baptism preparation		8		8
Holy Communion preparation	10	4		14
Confirmation preparation	2	3		5
Marriage preparation	0	0		0
RCIA programme delivery	1	5		6

3.5 Please list below other non-liturgical* lay voluntary roles that are present in your parish community along with numbers in the age categories shown. Please think widely here (e.g. PPC members, church cleaners, welcomers, Finance Committee members, musicians, flower arrangers, gardeners etc.)

**Note: Question 4.4 will ask for information about liturgical roles.*

Role	Under 40	40 - 70	Over 70	Total
SVP members / helpers		8		8
RCIA – occasional helpers		4		4
Instruction for Children at non-Catholic schools - helpers		4		4
Baptism courses - helpers		4		4
Confirmation courses – helpers		5		5
Marriage preparation		4		4
Life in the Spirit – helpers		4		4
Offertory – Collection - helpers	6	8		14
Offertory – Counting / Banking - helpers		14		14
Welcomers - helpers	14	15		29
Flowers – helpers		3		3
Divine Mercy Group – participants		8		8
Knights of St Columba - participants		6		6
Bereavement Group – participants		8		8
Prayer and Reflection Group – participants		9		9
Under fives / Mother and Toddlers group – helpers	6			6
Social Committee - members		9		9
Padre Pio Group – participants		4		4
Sheila Lovell Social Club – members		40		40
CAFOD – participants		6		6
Poetry Group – participants		8		8

- 3.6 Please identify the full range of social activities that take place in the parish community along with their frequency (where relevant).

Social Activity	Frequency
Teas after Wednesday and Sunday Mass	
Come and Sing	Weekly
Under five groups	Weekly in term time
Sheila Lovell Social Club	Weekly
Youth Club	Bi-weekly
Quiz nights	2 per year
Pamper evenings	2 per year
Parish Dinner and Dance	Annual
St Patricks evening	Annual
Music / performance events	4 per year
Poetry Group	Once every 4-6 weeks
Meditation	Weekly

4 Worship and Spiritual Life

- 4.1 Please indicate the venues and times of masses currently celebrated each **weekend**.

Venue	Day	Time
Our Lady of Lourdes Wanstead – Vigil Mass	Saturday	6:30 pm
Our Lady of Lourdes Wanstead – Masses	Sunday	9:30 am 11:30 am 6:30 pm

- 4.2 Please provide details of any planned changes to these arrangements.

None planned

- 4.3 Please provide details of other regular services celebrated in the parish community along with an indication of their frequency and venue.

Service	Frequency	Venue
Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament	Daily	Our Lady of Lourdes, Wanstead
Mass	Daily	Our Lady of Lourdes, Wanstead
Angelus and Morning Prayers	Daily	Our Lady of Lourdes, Wanstead

- 4.4 Approximately how many lay people have specific roles in the planning, preparation and celebration of masses and other liturgies?

Contribution	Number
Readers	90
Eucharistic Ministers	200
Children's Liturgy leaders	10
Altar Servers	100
Musicians / Choir	
Senior Choir	15
Junior Choir	20
Youth musicians	6
Leaders of Morning / Evening Prayer	
Angelus and Morning Prayer	8
Sacristans	4
Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament (daily)	

- 4.5 Please identify the range of other activities that contribute to the spiritual life of your parish community. Please think widely about the full range. (e.g. Prayer groups, Rosary groups, Parish Pilgrimages, Retreat Days, Accompanied Prayer etc.)

Group / Activity	Frequency	Venue
Prayer and Reflection	Weekly	Parish Hall
Life in the Spirit	Weekly	Parish Hall
Divine Mercy	Weekly	Parish Hall
Padre Pio	2-weekly	Parish Hall
Rosary	Daily	Church
Morning prayers	Daily	Church
Novena	2 times per year	Church
Meditation Group	Weekly	Parish Hall

5 Education and Continuing Formation

Adult Formation

- 5.1 Please identify the Adult Formation activities (offered by the parish, deanery or diocese) that people from your parish have participated in over the last 3 years. Where possible, please indicate the approximate number of people who have participated.

Adult Formation Activity	Yes / No		Approximate Number
Catechist Training Programmes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	4 per year 20
Eucharistic Ministry Training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	1 per year 200
Reader Training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	1 per year 90
CCRS Courses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	3
Lenten Study Groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	1 course 80-100

- 5.2 Does your parish offer a Journey in Faith programme to support Catholics who wish to learn more about their faith?

☒ Yes
 ☐ No

Young people in schools and their families

Catholic primary school(s) serving your parish

- 5.3 For each Catholic primary school serving your parish please complete the following information:

School Name: OLOL Primary School			
	2008	2012	2015
Total no. of Pupils	n/a	471	453
% of Catholic Pupils	n/a	96%	95%
Total no. of Teachers	n/a	24	18
% of Catholic Teachers	n/a	75%	67%

School Name: St Josephs			
	2008	2012	2015
Total no. of Pupils	166	n/a	172
% of Catholic Pupils	75%	n/a	69%
Total no. of Teachers	7	14	10
% of Catholic Teachers	100%	93%	90%

School Name: Loyola (Buckhurst Hill)			
	2008	2012	2015
Total no. of Pupils	178	185	199
% of Catholic Pupils	46%	43%	42.3%
Total no. of Teachers	8	16	19
% of Catholic Teachers	88%	75%	89.4%

- 5.4 Please describe briefly how the primary school(s) and the parish work together to prepare children for the sacraments.

LOL: Good relations between heads and PP. Come and See programme that ties in with parish preparation for sacraments. Youth leader has presence in school to co-ordinate

St Josephs: All pupils (including non-Catholics) go through the programme

- 5.5 How is / are the primary school(s) involved in the adult faith formation of the children's parents?

LOL: Mission week for parents and children. Parent's prayer group and attend assembly. Liaison with PP re parents' issues. 10 steps from Reason is distributed to parents (written by a parishioner). Masses at school and church in which children get involved in liturgy. Every Wednesday there is prayer for staff and parents

May Procession. Aylesford reflection/retreat – children and parent can attend

Good links and co-ordination between schools regarding the programmes

- 5.6 Where a Parish Pastoral Council or equivalent exists is there representation from the Head Teacher(s) or other staff member?

- No but school administrator at LOL is chair of current Parish Council

- 5.7 Where a Parish Pastoral Council or equivalent exists does the membership include school governors?

- No

- 5.8 Please describe how the primary school promotes links with the parish community and how the parish community promotes links with the school (e.g. Mini Vinnies, Fair Trade, joint social activities etc.)

Link	Brief description
Summer fetes and balls	
School Bazaars promoted to parish	
Carol Concerts	
Youth Club takes place in OLOL school hall	
Participation in music and liturgy	
CAFOD club fundraising	
Brentwood Catholic Childrens Society Fundraising	
Visiting Weavers and other homes for carol singing concerts	

- 5.9 Please give details of any joint parish / school celebrations of the Eucharist. Please include frequency and location.

OLOL school leads 9.30 Mass once a month. Come & See supports First Communion programme in the parish

Mass is held regularly in school and church for both schools. In the future, there will be more collaboration and joint masses

Reconciliation Service is held leading up to First Communion

- 5.10 Please give details of any joint school / parish non-Eucharistic celebrations. Please include frequency and location.

Harvest Festival

Carol Services

Patron saint, days of obligation and special masses throughout the years

Sports Days

- 5.11 Please describe any ways in which the school and parish share their buildings and other resources. (e.g. Hall, meeting rooms, minibuses etc.)

Youth Club is held in OLOL primary school premises

OLOL Brownies meets in Parish Halls

Both use Parish Hall rooms for meetings

Catholic Secondary (including Middle) school(s) serving your parish

5.12 For each Catholic secondary school serving your parish please provide the following information:

School Name: Trinity Catholic High School			
	2008	2012	2015
Total no. of Pupils	n/a	1668	1695
% of Catholic Pupils	n/a	93%	91%
Total no. of Teachers	51	124	113
% of Catholic Teachers	59%	48%	47%

School Name: Ursuline Academy Ilford			
	2008	2012	2015
Total no. of Pupils	628	76%	793
% of Catholic Pupils	71%	67%	63%
Total no. of Teachers	52	54	57
% of Catholic Teachers	48%	48%	46%

School Name: Palmer Academy			
	2008	2012	2015
Total no. of Pupils	1285	1304	1167
% of Catholic Pupils	69%	62%	63%
Total no. of Teachers	19	85	87
% of Catholic Teachers	42%	40%	38%

School Name: Holy Family Catholic School's			
	2008	2012	2015
Total no. of Pupils	1076	1110	1145
% of Catholic Pupils	81%	83%	83%
Total no. of Teachers	20	85	95
% of Catholic Teachers	40%	49%	40%

School Name: St Bonaventure's			
	2008	2012	2015
Total no. of Pupils	1284	1318	1256
% of Catholic Pupils	85%	89%	90%
Total no. of Teachers	34	98	121
% of Catholic Teachers	15%	47%	35%

School Name: St Angela's			
	2008	2012	2015
Total no. of Pupils	N/A		1361
% of Catholic Pupils			80%
Total no. of Teachers			101
% of Catholic Teachers			42%

The children of OLOL parish can also attend the local state schools (eg Wanstead High School), the two grammar schools in London Borough of Redbridge and local interdenominational independent schools eg Forest and Bancrofts as well as the Catholic independent school St Edmunds, Ware. For the schools enumerated above, only the Ursuline, Ilford and St Angela's chose to respond, despite several attempts to acquire the information from all. This is probably because the larger schools take their input from several parishes.

- 5.13 Please describe briefly how the secondary school(s) and the parish work together to prepare young people for the sacraments.

Ursuline: The scheme of work in RE has units on the sacraments and time is set aside to talk about confirmation. The retreat programme supports this. We have regular celebration of Mass and reconciliation during Lent and Advent using local priests

Holy Family: Year 10 students who make their Confirmation in the parishes are acknowledged in assembly at school. The school invites up to 10 clergy during Advent and Lent to facilitate the sacrament of Reconciliation so that students can prepare for the feasts of Christmas and Easter.

- 5.14 How is / are the secondary school(s) involved in the adult faith formation of the children's parents? (Include any joint work with the parish).

Ursuline: Parents are invited to school events, our Annual Carol Service, Service of Welcome for Year 7 and 12

5.15 Where a Parish Pastoral Council or equivalent exists is there any representation from the secondary school(s)?

☐ No (Ursuline and Holy Family)

5.16 Please describe how the secondary school(s) promote links with the parish community and how the parish community promotes links with the school(s) (e.g. Fair Trade, John Paul II Award, joint outreach activities etc.)

Link	Brief description
<i>Holy Family response</i>	
6 th form Justice and peace group liaise with parish group	
Form classes attend Friday morning Mass at local parish on a rota basis.	
Parish church is used for Carol Service and hampers are donated to Christian Kitchen	
The church is used at the end of retreats to celebrate a year Mass	
HCPT group from the parish made up of several students and staff from the school and led by the head of RE	

5.17 Please give details of any joint parish / secondary school celebrations of the Eucharist. Please include frequency and location.

Holy Family: Whole school Mass in November at the Assembly Halls is concelebrated by all the priests of the deanery. Parents and governors from the parishes invited.

5.18 Please give details of any joint parish / secondary school non-Eucharistic celebrations. Please include frequency and location.

Holy Family: The senior leadership team speak at Masses on Education Sunday throughout the deanery.

5.19 Please describe any ways in which the school and parish share their buildings and other resources. (e.g. Hall, meeting rooms, minibuses etc.)

Holy Family: Minibus has been used by primary school next door and the parish occasionally.

6 Outreach

6.1 Does your parish / deanery offer a RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) programme?

- ☒ Yes
 ☐ No

6.2 If Yes, how often does this take place?

Once a year for 24 weeks from late September until early May.

6.3 Please indicate any outreach activities that your parish is involved with *in the local area* (e.g. Food banks, Homeless projects, Asylum Seekers / Refugees, Prisoners / the families of prisoners, Drop-ins, Chaplaincy, Justice and Peace, Lourdes Youth etc.) Please indicate whether the parish makes a financial commitment.

Outreach activity	Brief description	Financial Commitment (Yes / No)	
Food collection for refugees	There is a monthly food collection for refugees in Redbridge. The food collected, which consists mostly of dry (past, rice) and tinned food, goes to St Cedd's Parish, Goodmayes, where it is further processed.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
The Refugee Centre	Some of our parishioners are involved with this charity that provides counselling and legal advice to refugees and asylum seekers.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
SVP	Some of our parishioners are involved with this charity that provides counselling and legal advice to refugees and asylum seekers.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Ministry to the Sick and Elderly	Ministers of Holy Communion, make regular visits to those of our parishioners who are not able to attend Mass. Often, Holy Communion is brought on these visits, providing those who are sick with the comfort, which the presence of Christ brings, as well as a continuing link with the parish community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Caritas Anchor House	One of our parishioners is CEO of this charity which is a residential and life-skills centre for single homeless adults, and acts as a community empowerment hub in the area of Newham. Each year there is a retiring collection for this charity.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

- 6.4 Please describe any active involvement your parish has in the cultural and political life of the local neighbourhood / district (e.g. local governance, social action, ward meetings, community forums etc.)

The parish priest and parishioners are actively involved in attending council meetings and other meetings which affect the local community including various ethnic groups eg closure of nursing homes, planning permissions etc. We also attend various cultural and religious functions in the local area.

- 6.5 Please describe any links that the parish community has *with other parts of the world*. (e.g. CAFOD, MISSIO – Red Boxes, our twin Diocese of Dundee, Aid to the Church in Need, parish overseas projects etc.) Please indicate whether the parish makes a financial commitment.

Outreach activity	Brief description	Financial Commitment (Yes / No)	
MISSIO	Parishioners hold "Red Boxes" in which they collect money for MISSIO. Each year there is a retiring collection for MISSIO. Every three months the MISSIO magazine "Mission Today" is available at the back of the church and is handed out along with the newsletter.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Calais Project	Project started in early 2016. Originally the project was a collaboration with Fr Dominic Howarth of Our Lady and All Saints, Basildon. Funds were requested through the parish newsletter and the money raised was used to buy sleeping bags for the refugee camps. After extensive research, a decision was made to work to raise funds for two charities, Samaritans Purse and Shelterbox, who help provide more stable and secure shelters. Fundraising events have already taken place and some more are planned for later this year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
CAFOD	There is a CAFOD Parish Committee and a CAFOD Parish Representative, who organise fundraising activities for this charity and its projects overseas, especially in El Salvador.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

- 6.6 During the past 12 months in what ways has the priest / deacon / religious engaged with other Christian faith leaders in the locality?

Actively involved with local Christian communities throughout the year especially around Easter and Christmas e.g. a meeting was hosted recently at OLOL to discuss Christmas cards distribution, Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, Holy Week and the Walk of Witness.

- 6.7 During the past 12 months in what ways has the parish community engaged with other Christian communities in the locality? (Please include activities / services as part of Churches Together, Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, Joint acts of witness / shared worship, joint social activities and joint outreach activities.)

Activity	Brief description
<i>Good Friday Walk of Witness – hosted by Our Lady of Lourdes Church</i>	<i>Around 70 people from all Christian denominations in the town walked behind a cross being carried between the churches concluding with prayer in the Town Centre.</i>
Christian Unity Service - hosted by Our Lady of Lourdes Church	
Remembrance Sunday – memorial service	Our Lady of Lourdes is always represented at this service at the Wanstead memorial.
Area Masses	These six area masses take place every Lent in various churches in the area eg Methodist, Church of England and United Reformed churches.

- 6.8 Over the past 12 months in what ways has the parish community engaged with Faith communities other than Christians in the locality? Please include visits, talks, joint activities etc.

Activity	Brief description
Meetings with members of other faith communities throughout the year	Meetings are held with local Jewish Rabbis and Muslim leaders for informal chats.

- 6.9 In what ways does the parish publicise itself and its activities to the wider community locally?

Through our website, newsletter, notice boards, word of mouth and posters.
--

7 Finances

7.1 Please complete the details below.

a) Income and Expenditure

£'s	2005/6	2009/10	2015/2016
Income:			
Offertory			209,948
Gift Aid			52,254
Donations			25,401
Other income			171,318
Total Income			458,921
Expenditure:			
Property			(86,838)
Personnel			(53,278)
Other costs			(227,060)
Total Expenditure			(367,176)
Surplus / (Deficit)			91,745

b) Surplus / deficit ignoring any extraordinary income or expenditure

£'s	2006	2010	2015
Surplus / (Deficit)		155,111	135,363

NB. This represents income minus expenditure, ignoring any extraordinary income or expenditure, e.g. one-off legacy or significant property repairs, etc.

Please answer the following questions based on the information collected above.

7.2 Does the current annual income for the parish meet its annual expenditure?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

7.3 How has the parish income changed since 2006?

Improved vastly

7.4 What are the major factors that have impacted upon parish income since 2006?

Gift Aid & Fundraising

7.5 Please provide the following information about parish balances:

£'s	Amount at March 2006	Amount at March 2010	Amount at March 2015
Parish Deposit (or loan)		433,413	1000,000
Parish Current Account		39,720	244,127

7.6 What is the percentage of people in the parish community who are signed up to Gift Aid?

50%

7.7 What is the average offertory per head each week?

£2.69

7.8 Please describe how parishioners are informed annually of the parish finances.

- ☐ By verbal statement
- ☒ By a displayed written statement
- ☐ By each person receiving a written statement (e.g. in bulletin)
- ☐ Through a general meeting
- ☐ Other – please describe

7.9 Please describe any significant fundraising activities that are in place within the parish at present.

New Stations of the Cross	Donations
Calais refugees	Coffee morning and donations

- 7.10 Please identify any factors (e.g. population shift, changes in local employment etc.) that will have a significant impact on the *financial position* of the parish over the next 5 years.

Factor	Potential Impact
Large numbers left parish because of lack of nearby catholic secondary school education	Loss of revenue
	Impact on places in primary school

- 7.11 Please describe any expenditure (excluding property costs) of more than £15K per individual project, anticipated within the next 5 years.

Nature of Expenditure	Anticipated Cost
Replacement of Stations of cross for 90 th anniversary of church	£20K



8 Facilities

Note: Where there is more than one church within a parish, this section will need to be repeated for each church site. Additional copies of this section and the next (Section 9 – Geographic Distance) are available on the website. Please use as many of these as you require.

8.1 Please provide information about the buildings associated with each church site within the parish.

Parish Name		Church Name		Capacity	
Our Lady of Lourdes		Our Lady Of Lourdes			

In your opinion		Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
8.2	What is the overall state of repair of the Church?	●	○	○	○
8.3	What is the overall state of repair of the Presbytery?	●	○	○	○
8.4	What is the overall state of repair of the Church Hall?	●	○	○	○
				Yes	No
8.5	Is there a car park?	● ○			
8.6	If Yes, how many parking spaces are there?	40			
8.7	Is there a parish office?	● ○			
8.8	Are there secure on-site storage facilities for confidential documentation?	● ○			
8.9	Is there an appointed Health & Safety Officer?	● ○			
8.10	Are the following regular check-ups up to date:				
	• Portable electrical appliances?	● ○			
	• Gas safety	● ○			
8.11	Are the following facilities available for people with disabilities?				
	• Accessible toilets	● ○			
	• Level access	● ○			
	• Ramped access	● ○			
	• Loop system	● ○			
8.12	If any of the above provision is lacking are there plans in place to improve the facilities?	○ ○			
8.13	If Yes, please elaborate:				

8.14 Does the church have a cemetery?

☐ Yes ☒ No

8.15 If Yes, who has responsibility for its care?

8.16 Please identify any other land / property for which the parish is responsible. (e.g. Residential lettings etc.)

Property / Land	Description

8.17 Please describe the meeting spaces that the church has and how many people they can accommodate.

Meeting Space	No. of people
5 meetings rooms in the Parish Centre	20
Main parish hall room	

8.18 Is there a place for smaller weekday Masses?

☐ Yes ☒ no

If Yes, please provide details

Masses usually take place in the church but sometimes mass is said in the parish hall if the church is being refurbished.

8.19 Does the community have property that is in excess of its requirements?

☐ Yes ☒ no

Inspire us all
in the Diocese of
Brentwood
to live the Gospel,

8.20 If Yes, please give details and any suggestions of ways to realise its potential.

Property / Land	Details / Suggestions

8.21 Are your premises used by external groups / organisations?

- ☒ Yes ☐ No

8.22 If Yes, please provide details of the nature and frequency of the activity and whether the organisation pays a hire charge.

Group	Activity	Frequency	Hire charge (Y / N)	
Mother & toddler group			<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Keep fit			<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Music group			<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Tai chi			<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Youth Group			<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

8.23 Does the parish collaborate with other denominations locally regarding use of buildings?

- ☒ Yes ☐ No

8.24 If Yes, please elaborate.

Area Masses held in other denomination buildings
--

8.25 Do you anticipate any instances of expenditure on property (£5k or more on a single item / project) in the next 5 years?

- ☒ Yes ☐ No

8.26 If Yes, please provide details.

Expenditure	Anticipated Cost
Some minor repairs to the Presbytery	

8.27 Please indicate the distances from the nearest primary and secondary schools to the church.

Name of school	Distance
Our Lady of Lourdes	Quarter of a mile
St Joseph's	Next door
Trinity	3.7 miles
Other Catholic secondary schools	3-5 miles

9 Geographic Distance

Note: Where there is more than one church within a parish, this section will need to be repeated for each church site. Additional copies of this section and the previous one (Section 8 – Facilities) are available on the website. Please use as many of these as you require.

Parish Name	Church Name
Our Lady of Lourdes	Our Lady of Lourdes

- 9.1 How many miles is it by road to the nearest 3 Catholic churches from this church?
(See data pack)

Church Name	Distance
St Anne Line South Woodford	2
St Thomas Canterbury Woodford Green	4
Our Lady & St George Walthamstow	1.9

- 9.2 From which parish church was your parish originally founded?

Our Lady & St George. Father O'Grady said the very first catholic mass in the area on Christmas Day 1910. OLOL's first parish priest was Father Booker in 1919

- 9.3 With which local parish / church communities does your parish have the strongest relationship(s)?

St Anne Line – Father Francis

- 9.4 Please describe any significant geographical obstacles between this church and other Catholic church(es) in your locality.

None

- 9.5 Based on the experience of your parishioners, how accessible is this church using public transport?

Easily Moderately With difficulty Not at all

○ ● ○ ○

Please elaborate.

Very near tube station and several bus routes

9.6 Does the parish provide any regular transport to church services?

☐

Yes

☐

No

9.7 If Yes, please explain.

No but the SVP arrange transport for their annual mass

10 Young People

10.1 Please describe how work with young people is co-ordinated within your parish.

- ☐ No co-ordination in place
- ☐ Co-ordinated by the priest
- ☐ Co-ordinated by a permanent deacon
- ☒ Co-ordinated by a paid youth worker
- ☐ Co-ordinated by a volunteer
- ☐ Co-ordinated by a group of volunteers
- ☐ Co-ordinated by the Parish Pastoral Council
- ☐ Other (please describe)

*to be open to change
and to move
forward together in hope.*

10.2 What activities, opportunities or projects are currently in place specifically for young people in your parish?

Activity	Brief description
Youth Club	Flourishing 100+ members
Mother & Toddler	
CAFOD Youth Group	
Mustard Seed Group	Discussion Group
Alter Servers	100
Brownies	Meet at School

10.3 How are young people involved in the wider planning / decision-making within the parish?

On parish Council

On Stewards Committee

10.4 Please describe the level of involvement that your parish has with opportunities provided by our Diocesan Youth Service (BCYS) and other Diocesan opportunities for young people.

Activity	Not involved	Limited involvement	Quite involved	Very involved
Walsingham House Youth Retreats	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Monthly Youth Mass	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
St John Bosco Camp	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Flame Events	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
World Youth Day	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
School missions programmes (e.g., by the Sion Community)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
National Youth Sunday	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Lourdes Pilgrimage – Youth Section	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Raise money for and participate in BCYS events and initiatives				

11 Vocations to the Priesthood and Religious Life

- 11.1 How many ordinations to the priesthood or diaconate have there been from your parish in the last 20 years?

None

- 11.2 How many men or women have entered religious life from your parish in the last 20 years?

1 Deacon

No priests

1 student at OSCOTT

- 11.3 Are there any current seminarians or religious postulants from your parish?

One

- 11.4 Are there any initiatives that your parish is taking to promote and encourage vocations to the priesthood, diaconate or religious life?

A lot of work with altar servers:

Train and treat videos

Videos etc

PP sends people on vocational weekends at diocesan and national level

12 Ethnic Chaplaincies and Eastern Catholic Churches

- 12.1 Are there any ethnic chaplaincies or Eastern Catholic Churches meeting in your parish?

Description	Frequency: Monthly/Weekly	Numbers
No		

- 12.2 Are any Catholics who are resident in your parish regularly attending an ethnic chaplaincy outside the parish, either as an alternative to the parish Sunday Mass, or in addition to attending the parish Sunday Mass?

Description	Location	Time	Freq.: Mthly/Wkly	Numbers
1 Italian family also frequent the Italian church in Clerkenwell				
1 German family also attend a German church				

- 12.3 Are any Catholics receiving pastoral care from an ethnic chaplaincy either within the parish or outside the parish?

Description	Location	Numbers
No but we have a welcome sign in many languages in the foyer and we provide multicultural readings every week in Polish, Portuguese, German, French, Spanish and Italian		

Part B - Reflective Questions

When Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee and called his first disciples (Mt 4:18), they must not have had a clue what they were getting into. Four fishermen became 'apprentices' to an itinerant leader, teacher and healer, overnight. In Mark's Gospel (Mk 1:21) the first thing they did was to accompany Jesus into the Synagogue in Capernaum, where he proceeded to break the Jewish law by healing a possessed man on the Sabbath.

There is something exciting about being a disciple, an 'apprentice' of Jesus. There is so much to learn and discover. Jesus walked around the countryside with his followers, both women and men; they were a community, a community on the move. The disciples were formed and shaped within this community.

Once Jesus died and rose from the dead, the disciples were terrified. They ran away (to Emmaus) or hid in an upper room or reverted to their previous job – seven of them went back fishing. Time after time Jesus came among them and reassured them. They were totally taken over by the Holy Spirit and began their work as missionaries; they are instructed to go out into the world and proclaim the Gospel.

We live in a very different world today. But as a result of our Baptism, we are called, gifted and sent. We too are sent into the world. We are missionaries within our local population, disciples among all the residents in our neighbourhood.

The local priest looks after the flock. We are immersed in the world; and we engage with each other, with those hurt by the Church, those separated from the Church for whatever reason and those beyond the institution of the Church. Every one of us has a particular pathway of discipleship to follow, and many of us discover it through the communities within which we live.

It is only right that we pray for more men to respond to the call of God to become ordained priests. It is also true that we all need to explore how God is calling us to make a difference in the world we live in. This calling (or vocation) may be to marriage, parenthood, the single life, nursing, policing... . God has an infinite imagination; there is a unique calling for each one of us. We become disciples when we learn to look at our world through the eyes of Jesus.

This questionnaire will help us to look at our community and discover how it can help each and every one of us become an apprentice of Jesus.

We have heard the facts and figures, the prospect of having 50 priests in our Diocese in 2030, the need for a wider variety of leadership in the Church and the very basic need to become more open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit who is leading us into the future.

Pope Francis gives us clear guidance when he says in *Evangelii Gaudium* (para 20):



"Each Christian and every community must discern the path that the Lord points out, but all of us are asked to obey his call to go forth from our own comfort zone in order to reach all the 'peripheries' in need of the light of the Gospel".

With this call in mind, let us begin to explore the questions before us

1 The Christian Faithful

The Christian Faithful are the heart of every worshipping community. If it is to flourish, a community needs a core of members who are committed to the Gospel of Christ and are willing to make the community a priority, giving generously of their time, imagination, gifts and other resources. A viable parish needs a healthy number of active members.

a) How can your community look to sustain and increase the number of people worshipping with you towards 2030?

The current high level of involvement of Our Lady of Lourdes parishioners in the liturgy, sacramental programmes and pastoral activities is largely attributable to the hard work and clear thinking of our parish priest (PP), Fr Sammon.

Our challenge then is to sustain this involvement and focus on areas that need development or more resources for when we no longer have a priest with Fr Sammon's strengths or, indeed, a priest at all.

We therefore need to:

- consider lay people being trained and funded for specific roles (eg our full-time Youth Leader)
- enable parents of young children to guide them to help their children grow in faith
- maintain the focus on youth, in our schools and sacramental based programmes and ensure the relevance of pastoral youth activities
- reach out to people in their 20's and 30's and who are becoming more alienated from their faith, especially those who are single
- support, care for and include our older parishioners
- have the Diocese devolve some responsibilities whilst encouraging more parishioners to participate in Diocesan and Deanery activities
- learn from Stewards of the Gospel initiatives elsewhere
- work more closely with other parishes, pooling resources and running shared programmes.

This will foster a more holistic and structured approach with clergy supported, supplemented and sometimes substituted by paid staff and volunteers who may be shared - but with a pastoral lead, strategic planning group or parish council taking more of a planning and co-ordinating role and ensuring that parish-specific needs are met.

All of which should help us evangelise more efficiently and sustain numbers.

2 Leadership

It is certain that in the future even more communities will be sharing a priest with other worshipping communities. Priests and deacons will be working more collaboratively with people. The prospect of having around 50 active priests in our Diocese in 15 years' time (2030) certainly sharpens the mind. While we must continue to pray that men will respond to the call of discipleship as ordained priests and deacons, we also need to look carefully at the development of other forms of leadership in the Church.

a) What lay leadership is currently viable and effective in your community?

Leadership in the parish is largely exercised by the parish priest. But our priests are not getting any younger. And people continue to die, be ill, get married, need their passport verified etc.

What lay leadership is currently viable in your community?

Wanstead parish is rich in professional people with many skills.

The laity are involved in leadership on a broad front. Many in the parish are senior leaders in education in Catholic schools, for example, locally and in other parts of London. Many are school governors, within the parish and elsewhere. There are local politicians, people in public office, senior public servants generally, leaders in national organisations, and those involved in diocesan and other ministries. Some of these individuals are actively involved in parish activities but other work and family circumstances precludes some people from being able to give commitment and time.

What lay leadership is currently effective in your community?

There is a potentially a huge well of leadership talent in our community. But there is probably little 'leading' as such, it is more 'organising'. It is not really clear that decision making has yet been devolved to the laity.

Suggestions from the parish survey include the role of women and married priests, the appointment of a parish administrator and the possibility of taking examples of leadership from other religious organisations.

Organisationally, leadership is on the basis of separate individual groups: volunteers leading functions such as choirs, SVP, altar servers, planning the roster for visiting the sick on Sundays, running the parish council (the question arises as to whether it is a leadership entity, or serving as a reference point/sounding board).

Moving beyond this, delegating 'leadership' to the laity, is a capability and accountability issue, and would need a diocesan mandate. Furthermore, structured rather than ad hoc training needs to be organised for laity willing to lead, so that they have a good, sound knowledge of their faith as well as a proper understanding of their future role. This would probably need to be funded by the diocese.

b) For what other areas of your community life could trained lay men and women assume responsibility?

There is, seemingly, a thirst for the laity to be more involved in leadership in the Church (it has been the way of the Church that the religious start things off, and then the laity carry them on – education, hospitals, care for the needy).

The issue seems to be about how to maintain pastoral care with few priests. People will attend Mass, but is there much enthusiasm for alternatives?

As we are not going to have more priests we need to try to keep our priests alive. Priests could probably be relieved of unnecessary additional burdens, such as administrative aspects of running a parish. It might be useful to consider what an alternative structure would look like: do we need a paid workforce? how do we organise any offices we decide to create? how do we decide who is employed (and all the issues that would go with that)?

We do have many well-qualified lay men and women who could assume responsibility within groups of parishes, if necessary (in the style of 'multi-academy trusts' perhaps, as some schools operate). Administered by trustees appointed by the bishop, and staffed by volunteers (rather like school governors) they could have capital devolved to them so they have the necessary budgets to run the estate. However, if clusters or pastoral areas were to be created then each parish or spiritual community incorporated into these groups may not have a resident priest and will need to be properly supported so that its own identity is maintained and not absorbed or dominated by the larger group.

Deaneries could form the basis for hubs of parishes, assuming a broad administrative responsibility, including for its schools, tied in with the other aspects of pastoral care, under a sort of 'CEO'.

3 Active Involvement of People

In parishes where the same small, ageing group of parishioners has served the community extremely well over very many years, there may be some real anxiety about the future. As that small group retires and withdraws from active involvement, the community is at risk of floundering if younger parishioners are unable or unwilling to take their place.

a) How diverse and active are parishioners within the community?

Parishioners regard both spiritual and pastoral care as the responsibility of all and believe there to be a wide range of involvement. Parishioners consider current levels of activity to be high. This is reflected well in Mass through the large groups of Ministries, Altar Servers, Choir, Welcome committee, cleaners and flower arrangers, to name a few, and by the large number of groups, activities and clubs that happen daily, weekly and monthly in the pastoral centre which is fully booked throughout the year. The Social Committee is extremely active and arranges a wide range of activities eg Race Nights, Dinner Dances, Sports Events etc.

Maintaining this vibrant level of activity will help to continue to attract and retain willing and faithful help for the parish - current activity will help to sustain future activity. We are a welcoming parish and we do have representation from a wide and diverse group of people within the varied church activities. Everyone is included and encouraged to be involved but it is still essential that we maintain this level of participation that has been established and developed by the active involvement of our parish priest.

However, with regards to diversity, parishioners have identified the youth, and also parents, as the biggest untapped resource as well as people new to the parish. They believe there should be more youth awareness and involvement in key decisions, which could, in turn also increase parental participation.

There is now a significant ethnic mix in our parish and we feel that more effort needs to be made to make sure that these families become more integrated. We do however provide translations of the gospel and readings at the back of the church for weekend masses. The solicitation of participation of *all* parishioners - thereby sharing the workload and responsibilities, is of upmost importance. We also recognise that often the best way to communicate is face to face so that the individual does feel that we value their input to the parish.

b) How can the parish community invite and prepare more people to support it?

We recognise that as a parish we need to review our people resources so that we can adapt them to meet the future needs and pressures inside and outside the church with a view to succession planning within the parish of key roles. We would like to introduce a strategic planning group which could be part of or separate to the Parish Council to help continue and future proof the work of the parish. We would like to consider the possibility of paid workers to organise duties so that skills and talents may be used efficiently and effectively, perhaps also employing a skills bank administrator. It is essential however that there is transparency on how roles are allocated and what is required to undertake them as well as accountability.

Parishioners have noted that large social events such as the parish picnic and Fr Pat's anniversary were very successful in bringing the parish together and for parish members to meet and talk to people they had not met before. Events like these could lead to people feeling more engaged and therefore more likely to participate in serving the community. For our spiritual development we would like to continue with events such as Café, Lenten talks and missions as well as introducing more scripture and prayer groups within the homes of individuals.

In a very practical sense, we could provide a directory listing all the ministries, activities and services that the parishioners engage with and support in the parish. This could be supported by clear information being made available all year round on roles available and how to apply for them. We could also run a 'career fair' on a given day where representatives from each ministry, activity or service could set up a 'stall' to inform and encourage people to sign up! We could include a weekly 'Job of the week' or 'Feature' in the newsletter outlining information, benefits and opportunities for individual ministries, services and activities.

We could give certain groups and committees a 'Youth Division'. This would work well on the Parish Council, for example, as giving the youth more responsibility in making decisions would give them a real sense of empowerment, ownership and belonging.

4 Worship and Spiritual Life

A flourishing community has worship at the centre of its life. The ultimate goal is to make Jesus Christ known and loved. This is why Jesus Christ is at the heart of every worshipping community. The Eucharist is the principal means in which we celebrate this. The Holy Spirit may well be leading us to discover a variety of forms of worship and devotion in the future. For this very reason a living community makes every effort to encourage parishioners of all ages and backgrounds to participate fully in prayer, devotion, worship and study.

God loves us individually. We respond to God's love in our own ways. When we come together for worship we all need to have a sense that our relationship with God is strengthened and affirmed.

a) Are there aspects of your community's regular worship together at Mass that are working particularly well and deepen the spiritual life of those present?

Masses at Our Lady of Lourdes deepen spiritual life, due to the many strengths of the parish that create a welcoming, inclusive and reverent environment.

Masses are spiritually deep because of the wider context of the parish. The many opportunities for involvement, funded roles (such as the Youth Co-ordinator), and open-mindedness, are key to creating a context for spirituality and truly communal worship.

The exceptional abilities and tireless work of the parish priest to build up and support lay roles, means that spirituality is deepened by witness – lay people 'walking in the path of Jesus' by undertaking Ministries (for example Minister of the Word, Eucharistic Minister, taking Communion to sick people). A significant proportion of the parish population is involved in some capacity.

The well-thought out, relevant and clearly delivered homilies deepen spirituality.

A wide choice of Masses – four per weekend, each with a different style – allows people to worship and deepen their spiritual life in a way that fits with their commitments and preferences. (9:30 Mass aimed at children and parents, with a junior choir 11:30 Mass for those to whom choral music is important, periodic Masses at which Youth musicians and choir take part).

The high standard of upkeep of the Church building creates a spiritual environment, as does gentle guidance on what is acceptable behaviour, and good examples.

Worship together at Mass is strengthened by spiritual association outside Mass – for example, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

b) Is there anything your community can do to encourage a deeper prayer life and engagement with Scripture?

To encourage a deeper prayer life, and engagement with scripture, we need to finance and formalise the extensive lay involvement that exists now.

We also need to be radical, moving towards a future in which women, and married priests, regarded as a spiritual asset welcomed by Jesus Christ for their abilities and calling, will have a more central role within the church. Priests as spiritual leaders need to be part of the modern world, open and open-minded – this requires a supportive social and psychological environment based on reality.

We wish to extend lay roles and pathways towards priesthood. This is an essential part of keeping the Church and spirituality alive and relevant. A suggestion at the Parish Meeting was to set up a local group to look at promoting vocations and widening routes into these.

Reflecting the diverse culture, a suggestion has been made for Special interest groups in which people can explore their faith – e.g. Pan African group. Another suggestion is to run retreats, at a cost that does not exclude any interested individual.

One gap is in engagement with scripture in the sense of opportunities for people to ‘live out’ scriptural teaching through action in the local community and interfaith groups.

Another possible gap is the apparent absence of engagement with scripture by teenagers. However, it is not necessarily a bad thing for young people to leave the Church temporarily, to return stronger. It is also the case that some young people are privately engaged with scripture through good works outside the Church.

5 Education and Continuing Formation

A flourishing community will be able to show that the Catholic faith is handed on to children, young people and adults by means of regular programmes of religious education and Christian Formation.

a) What good experiences has your community had in the past and what opportunities would you like to see for 'continuing formation' in the faith for members of your community?

Because young people are regarded as the future of the parish, factors causing some of them to drift away from the Church are a source of concern. Young people are represented on the Parish Council and on the Stewards' Committee. Initiatives to promote vocations include discussion with altar servers as well as relevant videos.

Boundary changes for secondary schools served by the parish are also a key source of concern. Planned housing developments and population growth could potentially increase the demand for both primary and secondary school places. Although most parish children attend Our Lady of Lourdes School, some attend independent schools.

The number of pupils attending non Catholic schools as well as the activities to support these children are discussed as part of the Stewards exercise. Local primary schools enjoy strong relationships with the Parish Priest; Mass is held regularly in both schools and the *Come and See* programme ties in well with parish preparation for the sacraments. Other activities include a Parents' Prayer group, Morning Prayer for staff and parents, a Mission Week and a reflection day at Aylesford. A member of OLOL school Admin staff is Chair of the Parish Council. Primary and secondary pupils serve at Sunday Masses, and OLOL pupils lead the liturgy at the children's Mass once a month. Altogether there are 20 Juniors and 15 Seniors in the Choir. Apart from Altar Servers, secondary pupils do not have a visible presence at Sunday Mass. During 9.30 Sunday Mass, about 50 children go to the Hall with Catechists and Lead Helpers. There is an online Safeguarding training programme for Helpers. All Youth Club volunteers have a DBS check and Safeguarding is well managed in line with recommended guidelines.

In 2016, 50% of OLOL school pupils transferred to Trinity or the Ursuline, Ilford and 7 pupils to other Catholic schools. 13 pupils transferred to Wanstead High School. Much of the decision making about choice of schools appears to be historical and transfer links are considered to be of poor quality. St Angela's, Wanstead High and Forest schools maintain regular contact with OLOL school. The secondary RE scheme contains units on the Sacraments and one school sets aside time to talk about Confirmation. Secondary schools did not provide any information about initiatives relating to their role of in promoting discussion about vocations.

b) How can closer relationships be developed between the worshipping community, the school(s)

The Parish should continually review procedures to ensure those in direct contact with children provide them with a safe environment.

Training and support for Catechists should be reviewed.

Reasons why some young people distance themselves from Mass and other Sacraments should be reviewed together with additional initiatives to support those not attending Catholic schools.

6 Outreach

A flourishing community extends a spirit of hospitality and invites people to become members. It also looks way beyond itself to discover how the spirit of Jesus can be brought to bear on everything that concerns us in the world: our relationship with other Christian Churches, women and men of other faiths and all men and women of good will in our world.

Under this heading we include: hospitality; Ecumenism; Interfaith relationships; involvement in local social and political issues and much more. It explores the practical ways we have of becoming 'missionary disciples'.

a) What good experiences has your community had regarding our call to be involved with other Christians, other faiths, all men and women of good will?

The parish is involved in dialogue with other Christians in the local area through Wanstead Churches together and the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The parish priest joins with other faiths at the Remembrance service each year in November and on Good Friday the parish is well represented at the Walk of Witness that concludes at Our Lady of Lourdes. For the first time this year, Our Lady of Lourdes is going to host the ecumenical Lent course in a area. The Women's World Day of Prayer was celebrated in the Church.

There is informal contact with other religions in the area. The other Christian churches are used by the parish for the area masses but these are not usually attended by the host church congregation.

Within the wider community parishioners visit and take communion to care homes and to housebound parishioners. This can number as many as 30 after Sunday Mass. There is an active SVP group in the parish. Other charity work (refugee support) is undertaken by parishioners on an informal basis rather than a specific Church initiative.

There is support with parishes in developing countries, particularly in El Salvador through CAFOD and support for a Kenyan village. There are regular talks from missionary orders throughout the year and parishioners are generous in their response to specific causes.

b) How can your worshipping community become more immersed in the local community?

From a parish survey and audit of the responses, parishioners have given various ideas to embed the community within the local community. There was a feeling that the worshipping community should expand its visibility to non-Catholics in the local area.

There could be more links to local churches, both neighbouring catholic parishes and to other religious faiths in the area. Until last year there was an outdoor mass each year at the rugby club that was felt to raise the profile of the worshipping community. The parish priest, as an influential and respected local community leader could act within the wider sphere of the local community.

There are several cultures in the parish and multi-cultural events could be introduced. It was felt it was important for the worshipping community to be involved in local events, perhaps taking part in the local festival, joining and giving voice to local initiatives and local projects. One suggestion was a more formalised support for the homeless and for refugees. Church events should be more widely advertised in the community and an involvement of the local press and media could enhance the profile of the church in the local area.

7 Finances

A sustainable community must have an annual income that is sufficient to cover its expenses. There needs to be a reliable level of stewardship among the faithful who willingly give of their time, gifts and energy to sustain the work of the community.

a) How do you feel about the average weekly offertory donation in your community? Does this need to increase to enable your community to flourish in 2030?

Offertory donations over the last 5 years have reduced by 7% and gift aid slightly increased. An increase in donations and other income resulted in the total income increase of 16%. Spending on Personnel and Property has increased threefold but economies under other costs means the Parish has moved from a deficit to a healthy surplus over 6 years.

£2.69 per head offertory appears low but there appears to be no way of comparing to other parishes in the area/ diocese unless this information is centrally held. The population is quite static but we would assume it does need to increase as it appears the strong gift aid and fundraising has helped us to have a surplus.

The finances have moved from deficit to surplus – the amount is very healthy due to controlled expenditure.

This is assuming we will only have one priest in residence but should parishes amalgamate or an order come in there would be greater expectations of funds to support more priests.

A suggestion also to open the parish centre for longer could bring in extra funds. The caretaker role would have to be extended rather than goodwill/ voluntary work. We would also like to explore ways in which people could give money to the church whilst still being able to gift aid eg credit/debit cards.

The parish administration role and working area needs to be revised – it may be worth considering a Parish Reception rather than the front door being the way into the Parish Office. We should consider separating the Priest's home from those who call in for information as the parish are aware we must look after the resident PP.

b) If you are a finance-rich community, how do you feel about sharing some of your resources with very poor parts of the Diocese?

We are a financially secure parish and recognise there may be other parishes which require support, although it may be the case that these may be the smaller, more rural parishes a long way from our area.

Knowing how low some offertory collections in other parishes are there is unlikely to be an objection if there are clear criteria and transparency in how the decisions are made. The implication is that there should be Diocesan benchmarking with local decisions made by Parish Councils and Finance Committees where the laity are clear about how laity contributions are distributed.

Before giving consideration to sharing resources there is a commitment in the parish to make sure that the new stations of the cross will be installed and that the Finance Committee will have a premises overview to indicate which areas within the church, car park, Pastoral Centre etc require decoration/repairs/ replacement.

The priorities identified by the community include funding expectations – of a Youth Leader, Parish Administrator and an administrator to organise a skills bank and job fair. There is a recognition that support is required for the PP, providing housekeeping also for the parish, in providing clerical and office staff. When developing a finance strategy, it must be recognised that this involves salaries so cannot be supported through fundraising.

8 Facilities

A flourishing community needs good facilities which need to be well maintained. It cannot undertake any building projects, renovations or improvements unless it has the resources to pay for them. It may be that in some places, there is a need for a plan for the community and a plan for the buildings, and they may be separate plans. It is also true to say that our buildings can be a witness to the presence of the Church in our world, or a drain on resources and energy.

a) What sort of use can your community foresee for any unused or underused parish facilities in the future?

The Church is mostly well attended for all Sunday Masses and the morning ones are at full capacity so there is very little spare capacity.

The Parish Pastoral Centre is heavily used for both parish sacramental programmes and other parish activities. There are many paid bookings both weekly and monthly so there is not much spare capacity as there has to be some free space in case there are other parish occasional needs.

The Church and Pastoral Centre are constantly maintained.

The Church has been kept well decorated and has been reordered since Father Sammon's arrival in February 2000. There are volunteers from the community who clean the Church weekly and before Easter and Christmas there is extra cleaning.

The Pastoral centre has a paid caretaker to do the daily cleaning from Monday to Friday with the exception of Thursday but each group is responsible for putting the Hall/room straight and doing the surface cleaning after they finish a session.

All facilities are inspected by the Diocesan Health and Safety authority and the parish conforms to these Regulations.

b) How can the community develop the capacity to look after its facilities in the future?

Wanstead has excellent transport available with both the Central Line and various bus routes passing the facilities.

In the future if the creation of Pastoral Areas becomes a reality then Wanstead would be an ideal centre with its capacity in both the presbytery for priests living quarters and expansion of office facilities however the latter would need to be separated from the living quarters as that should be private so that it was completely the priest's home.

Many years ago there were four priests resident in the parish so sleeping areas are available.

A Pastoral Area would need a full time paid post undertaking the management of all the various facilities of the Spiritual Centres of the combined Pastoral Area.

There is a large detached house situated on land encompassed by Addison Road, Cambridge Park and Gordon Road hence adjacent to Our Lady of Lourdes. The present owner is elderly and may sell the property at some stage so the parish should keep this site in mind and not lose the opportunity for acquisition.

In December 1910, Father O'Grady, parish priest of St George's Walthamstow, established a Catholic Mission in Wanstead. In 1917 Father O'Grady invited the Sisters of Mercy to establish a convent in the area. The Convent was built on a site stretching from the top of Gordon Road along Cambridge Park. The Sisters are now mostly elderly and in the foreseeable future may consider closing the Convent so this should be kept in mind for future acquisition. However the Sisters of Mercy also established a girls' school on the site and that may present a complication if this option became a possibility.

9 Geographic Distance

A flourishing community may be influenced by its location. The proximity of neighbouring parishes can have a real impact on the vibrancy of a community. If several communities are in close proximity with large, ageing buildings that are only half-full, this will need to be taken into account when considering the future.

Our basic question is about how we can enable communities to flourish in order for us to deepen our sense of discipleship and service. Our parish churches are not private chapels maintained simply because the community has enough money to cover the expense.

a) How does your community feel about the possibility that the only way to ensure flourishing in the future is to become part of a new parish community?

We are a large, thriving, well organised parish and we would welcome the opportunity to discuss with the wider community the ways in which we could effectively work together and share best practice. The only concern is that it might stretch our resources and we would not want our community to suffer adversely.

We welcome the opportunity to share our skills and resources with neighbouring parishes and the wider local community and, although our Pastoral Centre is often at capacity we would share facilities when available.

We would hope to enter into an arrangement that was fair and equitable to all concerned.

b) Are there ways in which your community can serve and support neighbouring communities?

We can see the way forward as us having an open and honest arrangement with other parishes where we collaborate rather than where any party might dominate in any way. We would like to discuss the ways in which resources could be shared. This might include providing Baptism, Communion, Confirmation, Youth Group, Marriage, RCIA programmes across several parishes. This could work particularly well if some of the lay instructor/lead positions were paid for roles with a group of volunteers to organise the sessions. Our Pastoral Centre is in use all year round and is often at capacity and over subscribed but these events could take place in different venues over a wider geographical area. It may be that social events could be organised in a similar way. This could lead to more collaboration for spiritual activities like prayer groups, Catholic education programmes, Lenten Talks etc.

d) If applicable, what is the relationship between different churches or Mass centres within the parish or between linked parishes?

Not applicable

e) Is/are there neighbouring parishes which would lend themselves to being linked to your parish or to becoming part of a partnership or “cluster”?

We have already met with some of our neighbouring parishes to discuss the Stewards of the Gospel process. It would appear that the possibility of a closer partnership with other parishes is being taken on board. However, the linking of parishes would need to be given careful consideration as the geographical area and population needs to be taken into account which may create practical difficulties. Potentially the size of the area, natural boundaries like roads and rivers and the number of Catholics in the area could create difficulties for a single priest and for parishioners living at the extremities. This emphasises even more the need to develop a broader, more structured and organised laity involvement across a wider area.

In some cases a collaboration already exists among the priests of local parishes. We believe that even if there is a desire among parishes to progress this idea, the initiative may have to come from the diocese as it will be aware of the bigger picture and what resources individual parishes have.

Our Lady of Lourdes parish would be very willing to enter into a dialogue with the diocese regarding our relationship with other parishes but we would wish to know what the framework would look like and what parameters we would be working within.

10 Young People

Young people are not just the 'future' of the Church; they are very much part of the present. We all need to look at how actively young people are encouraged and affirmed in their contribution to the community throughout the year. The enthusiasm and energy of young people can sometimes be daunting to those who are older, but they are also signs of the Holy Spirit within us and among us.

a) What good experiences regarding Church life do the young people have in your community?

Having a paid for youth leader in place to coordinate all youth activities both spiritual and social is invaluable in our parish.

The children's choir and family mass is beneficial for younger children as it allows the children to become more involved in the liturgy.

The parish provides opportunity for its young people to go on retreat at Walsingham House and Lourdes and they participate in the youth masses, and Flame.

Young people are encouraged to attend World Youth Day to represent the parish.

Our young people attend activities at BCYS and we have a youth club and an Under Fives Group which help to build strong bonds of friendship among the young and families.

A large number of our young people are altar servers and help at the offertory. Some are Extraordinary Ministers for Communion or Readers at mass. Young people are represented on the parish council and on the Stewards of the Gospel programme.

There is a good support network in the parish that helps people feel welcomed and happy.

The strong community is very helpful and has a family like atmosphere, which shows the church's caring nature.

The parish has good links with religious schools in its area and organises after school RE courses for those attending non- Catholic schools.

Some church members are dedicated volunteers who give their time to help run First Holy Communion and Confirmation classes. This gives young people an example of commitment to the church and forms part of the good support network we provide them.

b) How can the presence and witness of young people be more encouraged and supported in the community?

The value of having our young people at mass cannot be underestimated. Young people like our altar servers act as role models and we feel it is important that they are welcomed, valued and included. We must instil in our young people the sacred nature of the mass and the importance of the liturgy central to our Catholic faith. We need to help our parents to understand the mass and the Catholic faith better so that they can pass it on to their children. We would also like to encourage our young people to have a social conscience and sense of social justice. By ensuring that we implement these initiatives we would wish to promote and encourage our young people to seek vocations in the priesthood and religious life.

What our young people would like:

- New hymns introduced that are more lively and joyful, not that the existing hymns are discarded but that more upbeat new hymns are included. Perhaps sometimes introducing a more “Gospel” style choir singing.
- Teen masses at 6:30 on Sunday, where teens play a large part in running the mass.
- Prayer and meditation sessions once a week for teens.
- More retreats for teens as it is a very enjoyable way of connecting with God.
- Volunteer opportunities for young people, like helping run clubs for the younger children, so that they can play a more active role in the church.
- More time for silent reflection during mass, for instance, after the homily giving young people the opportunity to participate more fully.
- Having a teen council team in each parish in Brentwood. These could come together every few months to discuss new ideas for the church’s young people.
- Possibly setting up a Junior SVP group and having more involvement with outside youth organisations like The East London Community Organisation.
- Get young people to organise events like summer fayres, Easter egg hunts, bake sales, fundraiser events.
- Teen debate club that discusses religion, faith and society.
- More communication via social media and more information made available to young people on what they can do in the parish.

11 What Else?

- a) **Given all the findings you have explored in Part A of this questionnaire, what would you see as the priorities to ensure a viable and flourishing community in 2030?**

Historically we have accepted that the Parish Priest is in control, but what does that mean? We have to consider a paradigm shift, gone are the days where Parishes had curates or two or three of them. The Catholic Community in Wanstead is remarkably talented and giving but when we look forward do we have the right mix, the right talents, at the right time? This is something that we have to address. We have been blessed by having a Parish Priest who has had a blue print for the engagement of the Worshipping Community, but how do we get that into the DNA of the Parish and would the next Parish Priest wish to work in this way?

A scheme of Parish Delegation should consider how to run a parish , and how it could be delegated /devolved to the laity with appropriate checks and controls in place, not just lip service to issues like safeguarding, and this could liberate the priests to meet the Spiritual needs of the community. It could include;

- Terms of Reference for a Board of Administration and Finance
- The templates for all systems and procedures relating to Finance, Safeguarding, Health and Safety, Facilities management, Buildings, Formation of PARISH Organisations and groups
- An annual year planner for the above
- A standard annual return to ensure compliance, with all of the above
- Parish data base, data management and compliance

b) Do you have any other observations - particularly about anything we may have missed?

The Catholic Community seems to exist in many silos, and in hierarchies and control systems, where undoubtedly we do not maximise our efforts or contributions as worshipping Catholics. The Stewards of the Gospel process start us thinking holistically and in a co-ordinated manner at a parish and Diocesan level but that is only part of the story.

The Catholic Community has a rich and historical tradition of working in education, the health and care systems, the justice system, community activism, housing and homelessness to name but a few. Sport is a link that the Catholic Community is working with through the John Paul Foundation. Our schools are a key ingredient of Catholic life, but is that solely about our beliefs in our Religion or has it become more about obtaining a good education?

In our Parish, we have two schools, two convents, SVP, leading figures in society, leaders of charities, CAFOD But where are we as a worshipping community in the Civic Square. At a Diocesan level the institutions are too numerous to mention, and at a national level, there is a multitude but do we maximise our potential and harness our capabilities? The Catholic Community is heavily involved with TELCO and Citizens UK.

If we are to be a Universal Church and we are aspiring to be Evangelising Communities we clearly have some thinking to do about our way of working, thinking, communicating and celebrating and participating in our religion, in our Parish, in our Diocese and with the multitude of other aspects and organisations within the Catholic Community.

The Stewards of the Gospel process in its many manifestations is happening in most Dioceses and its focus is on closing and amalgamating of parishes, but we need to look at how we participate and celebrate our religion, it isn't solely about Parishes and Priests, it is about the how do we do things, how we exercise control, how we delegate to manage our resources effectively.

How do we consider the use of technology for example? There is the ability to link the Pope directly to every Catholic, but would the Cardinals, Archbishops and Bishops entertain this. We could beam the celebration of Mass into the homes of the sick, just prior to them receiving the Eucharist, they could be afforded access to Vatican TV and RADIO.. The use of a Parish web site or perhaps an Intranet could transform the connectivity of the Catholic Community if there was greater interactivity and greater communication. This would allow Parishioners to have greater interactivity with the life of their worshipping community and the wider Catholic Community.

What are the attributes of an effective priest? What is an effective priest? These are questions that will have people scratching their heads and debating until the cows come home, but we have to face into the underlying reality of this process, that there will be less priests and what do we expect of them. Equally what are the attributes expected of a Parish Community

Nobody in our parish is going to be able to answer these questions without the consideration of the views and inputs of others eg The Seminaries (are they addressing the practical needs of being a Parish priest in 2040 for example). We expect priests to be managers, do they have the skills? Should we consider a Diocesan Scheme of Parish delegation, where the Parish priest is our Spiritual leader, and the Parishioners are expected to shoulder the burden of the administration. It would be useful if every Parish and priest in the Diocese had an element of consistency in how they ran, removing the fear of Parishioners as to who they may get next, and how they may turn everything over.

The finality is about how we can engage with other catholic organisations where there is great potential emerging and the baton of the religious orders is in need of being handed over, but to whom?

12 Good Practice

There is no doubt that there are some really innovative things going on within our worshipping communities from Parish Fun Days which bring together the whole community to imaginative liturgies during Holy Week; from exciting Confirmation programmes to pilgrimages and vigils.

a) Is there something your community is involved in which will be of interest to others in the Diocese? *Please use as much space as you need.*

Fr Pat Sammon has actively encouraged and developed the role of all parishioners in all aspects of parish life and lay ministry since his arrival some seventeen years ago. The success of this can be seen in all aspects as discussed in other areas of this document.

The comprehensive involvement of the laity within the Parish is in itself the greatest manifestation of good practice in a large parish where there is normally only a single priest.

1. Employed (paid) Youth Coordinator

We have a paid full time Youth Coordinator who is engaged in coordinating youth development and ministry through:-

- First Holy Communion Programme
- Confirmation Programme
- Work within our parish primary schools further secondary schools
- Youth Club

Other lay people are involved as catechesis and helpers. The role of this post is one of coordination and safeguarding.

This post has been highly successful and warmly welcomed within the Parish.

2. Young Altar Server encouragement

Our young Altar Servers range in age from 8 to 18 years. At any one time there are over 100 young servers involved in this ministry. With all the distractions in their lives and in order to recognise their efforts, we have introduced a number of steps to reward, recognise and encourage them.

- After a period of training they wear a plain wooden cross over their alb. They wear a white cord around their waist.
- After one year or 20 occasions of serving they are enrolled in the Guild of St Stephen of Altar Servers and receive the bronze Guild medal. They wear a white cord around their waist.
- Once they have served 100 times or have reached secondary school age they are recognised a Senior Servers and wear a red cord to recognise this.
- As they progress into their middle teens they are recognised a deputy Mass MCs and later Mass MCs whereby they are involved in developing and encouraging the younger servers.
- After 10 years serving at the Altar they receive the Guild's silver medal. This is normally in the last year of secondary school. It is partially a reward but also encouragement for continued ministry as a server or other capacity.

We also run a Train and Treat Session at Christmas in the Parish Centre. This is for all our young servers and involves meeting the newly trained servers. The Christmas Train and Treat is successful with 30-40 servers attending. We have tried this in the summer too but it is less successful probably due to other distracting activities in our young persons' lives.

3 A strong team of Adult Altar Servers for weekday Mass and funerals

We have a strong team of at least 10 adult altar servers who serve at weekday Mass and funerals.

Part C *Not to be completed until November 2016*

Our Parish Community's Initial Thoughts and Ideas about the Future

Based upon the wide consultation and reflection that has taken place in completing parts A and B of this questionnaire, please use this section to provide an indication of your parish community's initial thoughts about its future. You are also asked to provide information about the consultation process that has taken place to inform these views.

a) Our initial thoughts and ideas

Based on everything you have prayerfully and carefully considered so far please set out below the initial thoughts and ideas from your community about the way forward for your parish. You may also wish to provide a view about anything that is emerging regarding the ability of your parish to flourish into the future – either on its own or in conjunction with another community.

Please feel free to use as much space as you need.

There is no doubt that currently the high level of involvement and participation of parishioners at Our Lady of Lourdes and the high turnout at masses and at church events is largely attributable to the hard work and clear thinking of our parish priest, Fr Sammon. Our challenge is to sustain that level of involvement from the laity and focus on areas that need development when, inevitably, we may not have a priest with Fr Sammon's strength of character and foresight or, indeed, a priest at all.

After a lot of debate and discussion within the parish we recognise that we cannot be complacent but know that it may prove difficult to maintain an active laity in the future. We believe that in order to encourage more people to take on roles which would assist the priest or replace him in non-conflicting tasks, may involve more radical thinking. But it would provide us with the ability to evangelise more efficiently which, in turn will help sustain and increase the numbers of people involved in our local Catholic community.

There are no easy answers but, for example, we would like to consider ways in which we could work more closely with other parishes locally and across the diocese for the benefit of all concerned. We are a large and, in many ways a very efficient parish but what the Stewards of the Gospel process has taught us is that we can learn from other parishes and even from other dioceses who have gone through this exercise before us. We would like to explore, in collaboration with the diocese, how we can work more closely together to perhaps pool some resources and benefit from best practice.

In addition we would like to explore the possibility of members of the laity being funded to train for specific roles which would lead to them taking on paid for positions. We already have a full time Youth Leader in our parish which we recognise as being a real bonus to our young people. Perhaps in the way of organised charities we could consider a more structured approach where we have full time staff, plus volunteers who could be spread across more than one parish but with a pastoral lead and involvement which might be an appointment made by the diocese. As part of this we should consider introducing a forum to promote vocations in order to encourage more people to join the priesthood and religious life. It is important that the parish continues to be the centre of prayer and Sacraments.

"Invest in young people - they are the future" was the most frequently mentioned suggestion from our parish questionnaire. It is clear from the feedback that our parishioners feel strongly about encouraging our young people. This is being done through religious education and guidance but it needs to be appropriate and relevant to young people today whilst maintaining the values, morals, principals and spirituality of our Catholic faith. Our Catholic schools provide support in religious education but the parish puts a big emphasis on our young people especially through the work being done by our Youth Leader. Also through our Baptism, Communion and Confirmation programmes and the after school sessions which take place for young people who do not attend Catholic schools. We know that there are

many influences on our young people and we strive to provide the best possible environment for their spiritual growth but we still need to address the underlying reasons that are causing our young people to drift away from the church as evidenced by the fall in numbers of candidates for confirmation.

As an extension of this we feel that young parents may require more support in relation to understanding their faith better so that they can answer questions and help their children to grow in their faith. However, it is important to recognise that a commitment by parents to this process can be undermined and hindered by time constraints related to family life including unpredictable working environments.

There is a need also to reach out to men and women in their 20's and 30's and those who are much older members of our community. These people are becoming increasingly more alienated, especially those who are single. There are various activities organised by the parish social committee but not all are inclusive to these groups. Currently we also have a regular mother and toddler group and over 50's afternoon club in the parish and education programmes during Lent and other times of the year for all the adult community. A mission is being planned for next year to celebrate the 90th anniversary of the parish.

Much more could be done to include these groups. This could be addressed if we embrace a more structured and collaborative approach in our parish with active lay people participating in the process.

As we consider the future where the lack of priests and smaller congregations is becoming an issue for the Catholic Church in the UK, we have to give serious consideration to the best way forward. Although not part of our remit, many parishioners expressed the view that the role of married priests and of women within the church should be considered and reviewed.

Many of the activities at Our Lady of Lourdes are already being run by lay people on a voluntary basis, although overseen by Fr Sammon. This includes the Confirmation and Baptism courses, the first Reconciliation and first Communion programme, the RCIA programme, marriage preparation courses and The Stewards of the Gospel. At Our Lady of Lourdes we would like to see a future for our Catholic community where there would be more involvement of the laity, through effective leadership, with more authority, responsibility and freedom being devolved from the diocese. Where there would be support from the diocese and where there would be clear guidance on the structure, roles and accountability of the people involved.

Please describe the process used within your parish to consult widely with the community on your responses to this question. Please include the dates of meetings and other activities you have held, their purpose and the numbers attending. Thank you.

The following is by no means a full list of all the meetings that took place. In the course of researching the information required for each section many of the working party had meetings with various groups within the parish to obtain a better picture. For example, meetings with schools and educationalists, Confirmation Group, Parish Council, Local Council, RCIA etc. Between meetings Fr Pat was kept fully briefed although he mostly allowed the Stewards group to carry out the process, intentionally, with minimal involvement. Other meetings took place regularly between individuals and me to make sure the process was running smoothly.

Date of meeting or other activity	Nature of activity (e.g. open parish meeting)	Purpose of meeting / activity	Numbers attending / participating
05/03/16	First meeting of the group appointed to carry out the Stewards of the Gospel initiative	To discuss how we were going to approach the whole process r our parish	8
26/06/16	Stewards Group meeting	To decide exactly how we were going to tackle Part A	6
12/07/16	Meeting with headteacher of OLOL primary school	To gain information for the Education sections of the document	2
16/08/16	Meeting of sub group of the Stewards group	To make sure we were on target to fill out Part A	3
04/09/16	Stewards Group meeting	To discuss how we were going to involve more of the parish in the process	6
10-11/09/16	Steward spoke at all masses about the Stewards of the Gospel process and what it would involve	To make the whole parish aware of the serious nature of this topic and to engage people in the process. A brief, written survey was filled out by parishioners at the homily to garner opinion	Estimate: 1,800
22/09/16	Parish meeting which was well promoted	Influenced by the survey responses we broke into groups for discussion and feedback was obtained from each group	80-90
01/11/16	Enlarged Stewards Group meeting	To discuss how we were going to tackle Part B	12
18/01/17	Stewards Group meeting	To make sure all sections in Part B were being completed	12
02+09/02/17	Stewards Group meeting	To discuss each section of Part B in detail and make amendments if necessary	12

We expect to receive completed questionnaires by 31 December 2016. We will then begin to analyse all of the findings and be back in touch with every parish once this task has been completed.

Thank you so much for all your work and observations.
We hope this whole exercise has been fruitful and enlightening.
Please continue to pray for all those involved in the next stage of Stewards of the Gospel.



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