

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES - FEEDBACK FROM AFTERNOON SESSION

Baptism

- Growing parishes – enough people to help is main problem
- Visits before preparations – very important
- Family catechesis
- Follow on program e.g. Godstart

Imagining the Church of the Future

- Eucharist in smaller communities
 - To build up relationships of believers
- A servant church for “poor” > emotionally > physically > spiritually
- More focused resources for Sacraments – to leave time for other services

Spirituality of Leadership

- To call people within parishes to leadership
- “Leadership” not only doing a job
- The origin of leadership is from baptism – there’s no ‘super baptism’ for priests/bishops
- Baptism, and therefore leadership, is a continuing process
- Baptism is a call to mission for all
- What is the underlying spirituality of a person in leadership
- We are called by God into a Communion of love and all leadership is geared to call people into this communion

Living with “the unfinished” – Not losing heart

Sacramental work is always unfinished. This is a reality. We know it's going to happen – need acceptance of this.

- Life is a process. Faith is a process. So we shouldn't lose heart – we sow the seeds which God waters.
- We need to ‘keep on keeping on’.
- “God works through us and in spite of us”. Frank Anderson
- Trust in God.
- Frustration for us in the use of the words “getting done”.

Follow up of Reconciliation

- Promote Fridays. Rethink. Recommit. Prayer.
- Celebrate grade 3 (Rite 2). Follow up Grade 5 (Rite 1)
- God Start
- Family activities (Week day twice a day)
- Social Justice link

GIVER —
RECEIVER
MUTUALITY

LIVING WITH
THE
“UNFINISHED”
& NOT LOSING HEART

BAPTISM
PREPARATION

BUILDING
BETTER
PERSONAL
RELATIONSHIPS
IN PARISH



NON —
SPIRITUAL
MOTIVES
EXPLORATION



SPIRITUALITY
OF
LEADERSHIP

SPIRITUALITY
OF
PARISH



Multicultural Issues

- Multicultural is our future.
- Different tradition
- Common link to home
- The challenge is what people would like to experience
 - Seeing people from overseas no longer as guests but welcomed as co-owners
 - How do we genuinely respect other faith rituals – Parish Fiesta
- We are glad to have a multicultural society and we are enriched by their presence.

Parish Based R.E . Programs

- Opportunity for parents to be involved and educated in Sacraments – Parish-based. (Catholic school parents)
- Need for flexibility to accommodate Parents' commitments and of liturgical calendar.
- Good materials... (personalised for Parish)
- Allow for post-infant baptism... Post primary school Sacraments of Initiation.

Non Spiritual Motives

- Ticks in box – get it done – habit
- Get into non-gov schools (parents want academics/discipline)
- Knowledge of God – values
- Is the decision to “get it done” driven by God?
- Fan the smallest flame of faith (Benedict XVI)
- Do not see the “formal” church as integral to life.

Post-Sacrament involvement

- Parish appointed godparent to support child on spiritual journey.
 - Draws in community
 - Reminds community responsibility to evangelise
 - Work in progress
 - Encourage children to participate in Liturgy.
 - Children's liturgy regularly
- Encourage youth to participate in children's liturgy
- Youth Ministry (Yr 11, 12 and workers)
- Youth Mass – separate from Parish Mass - monthly based around what they are interested in
 - prayer focus
 - song

Ministering the Sacraments ~ Challenges and Opportunities for Large Numbers

Presented by Bishop Timothy Costelloe sdb at the seminar
6 March 2009

Summary points:

1. We need to accept and think through the implications of our belief that initiation into the mystery of life in the Church, at least for our children, is a continuous process involving a number of years, rather than a series of largely disconnected sacramental events.
2. The whole process of formation in the faith, however it happens (parish, home, school), is preparation for the various sacraments of initiation.
3. Immediate preparation for each of the sacraments of initiation does not have to be, or should not have to be, as onerous and exhaustive as it often presently is.
4. The most important "actor" in each of the sacraments is not the candidate, or the family, or the teacher/catechist, or the priest, but God who through his Spirit unfailingly offers his gift of life through the celebration of the sacrament.
5. The celebration of the liturgy for each sacrament, well-prepared, dignified and uncluttered, is a pivotal moment in our understanding and appreciation of what God is doing and what is being asked of us.



Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne

Evangelisation in Parishes Outer Suburban Melbourne Project

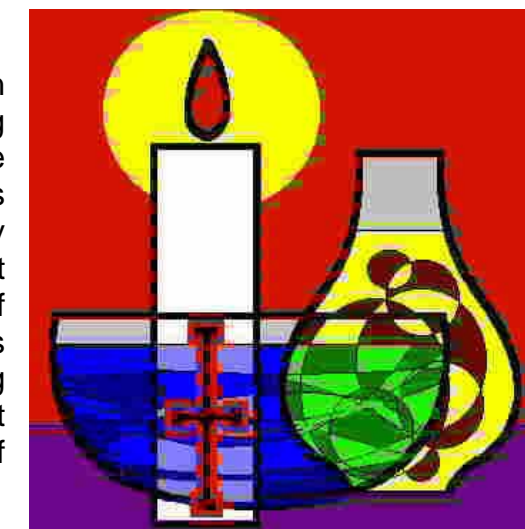
March 2009

Ministering the sacraments

~ challenges & opportunities for large numbers.

On Friday the 6th March a number of parishes gathered at Hampton Park for the second *Parishes Outer Suburban Melbourne Project* seminar day. At the December 2008 gathering a number of topics were identified for further discussion by the group: the challenges and opportunities for preparing and celebrating sacraments with large numbers one of the key areas.

Bishop Tim Costelloe sdb prepared and delivered an insightful and challenging keynote address. Following morning tea and responses from the participants he engaged with the questions raised. Many participants found his presentation not only reminded them of key theological understandings regarding sacraments but challenged them to think in new ways about the place of immediate preparation for sacraments. He reminded us that whilst we are called to do all we can in preparing children, families and communities 'sacraments are not prizes given out for good behaviour ...they are gifts of grace offered by God.'



Summary points from Bishop Tim's presentation are given on the back page along with some images from the day.

Sr Bernadette Keating facilitated the day assisting us in asking questions and thinking through the implications of what was being presented. The afternoon session allowed for sharing and discussion on a range of topics related to the question of preparation and ministering sacraments in outer suburban parishes. A summary of the feedback is included on the following pages.

In all 56 participants from 19 different parishes attended, including 2 deacons and 2 seminarians. We were delighted to have participants from the Sale diocese and value the contribution of those large parishes on the urban border.

The planning team for the project will meet in May to explore ways to continue the discussion, network and support of parishes in the outer suburban area. It is anticipated that one more large gathering would be held in the second half of the year. We are pleased to hear any suggestions for ways in which the office can continue to support parishes through this project. I can be contacted via email: ccrawford@melbourne.catholic.org.au.

May Easter be a time of blessings and renewed hope for you,

Carmel Crawford
Archbishop's Office for Evangelisation

The work of preparing children for the sacraments of initiation begins prior to their baptism and continues as an uninterrupted process until their Confirmation and even beyond (Mystagogia).



The giftedness of this sacrament, does not depend on the extent of the child's prior understanding.

