

STEWARDS OF THE GOSPEL



Parish of St Mary Immaculate & The Holy Archangels, Kelvedon

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is our parish:

We are a very welcoming and social parish with a large elderly population and a gap in age range between 14-40 year olds which reflects the sociology of the area, with probably the exception of Tiptree. With regards to leadership we have leaders in First Holy Communion, Altar Servers, Children's Liturgy, Confirmation, Youth Group, Stewards' Outreach Team, Pastoral Visiting Team, Finance & Maintenance, Social Group and Prayer Groups. We have a good number of ministers in all areas of liturgy, social and pastoral, however, these fall mainly in a core group of people most of whom are of retirement age. Mass and Rosary group are a strong part of our spiritual life and very well liked. However, other spiritual activities are not well supported. We have a very strong Ecumenical parish life.

These are our challenges:

We need to attract young families and young people in general which is difficult for us because we do not have a Catholic school attached. Furthermore, our children are scattered among more than 10 different primary schools and around 8 different Secondary schools, most of whom are not Catholic. We need to find a way to respond to the consequences of the housing situation – prices and availability – which forces young families to move elsewhere, leaving the parish with a largely older population. We need also to motivate younger people to attend our formation and spiritual development events and courses, which we offer but are not well supported. Another challenge for us is the lack of public transport which limits the ability – specially of the elderly - to attend services and other parish events. Another challenge is to address the issue of irregular practice and reaching out to those Catholics in the parish that are not active in parish life. Finally, the parish is in the middle of an extensive new building planning project which will be a huge challenge for us in reaching out to new families.

These are our hopes:

Our hope would be to build more of a church community that manages to engage the younger families and young people. Also to reach out to resting Catholics and non-believers within the parish. We would also like to have a more prayerful and spiritual parish. We do hope for more pastoral involvement of parishioners, especially in the care of our elderly.

This is what we want to do:

We want to have a PPC that is more pastoral and involved in community issues. We want to have: better communication with our parishioners on issues of finances, pastoral and social; Increase our formation both, spiritual and ecclesial; develop new and more practical activities to attract men and young people and fulfil our outreach programme. With regards to the possibility of merging, most parishioners agreed – with some exceptions from our church in Coggeshall - that if this was necessary, our best and more natural combinations would be:

Kelvedon-Witham; Tiptree-Maldon; Coggeshall-Braintree.

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