

OUR LADY OF THE VALLEY – PARISH SURVEY

Survey themes

Dear parishioners,

Fr. Peter and the parish council thank you for your participation and candid responses. 40 responses were received, and this document is a synthesis of those responses (not a verbatim transcript).

A. GOVERNANCE

Transparency

- Provide zoom access to PPC mtgs
- Contact info for PPC members
- Operate with transparency/accountability eg. publish the work that has been done
- Publish PPC minutes

Planning/expansion

- Follow-through on plans
- Build a Catholic Columbarium
- Parish Hall to hold events
- Parents room with sound and window

Information sharing

Bulletin

- The printed sermons are too many in the bulletin
- Layout needs improvement – messy – basic info needs to always be in the same place; contact information for key people; No consistency on where to find information
- Referring people to the website only works if they have access and are computer literate; need to print the info as well; announcements alone are inadequate
- Post bulletin to website before the weekend. Not helpful next week.
- Incorporate feel good announcements; Upcoming activities; School announcements; funerals; baptisms; weddings; community involvements; recommend books; movies; trusted websites for catholic information; prayer intentions; diocesan events (speakers etc)

Parish website

- Much improved
- Individual Ministry webpages – should be dynamic with latest info and upcoming events
- PPC webpage with minutes
- Post Fr. Henry's story and parish history
- Schedules of readers, ushers, musicians, eucharistic ministers
- Links to trusted websites/resources – adult formation; continuing catechesis - Fr. Dr Doherty OMI

B. MINISTRY

Being a welcoming community

- Greeters at the front and side doors
- Coffee after Mass
- Create a Social committee

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- Monthly Seniors mass followed by breakfast
- Picnics/BBQ; concerts; Family movie nights
- Parent groups; Married couples' groups; Singles groups
- Prayer groups
- Spanish speaking outreach
- Welcoming and follow-up with immigrant families; Plan to assist immigrants/newcomers?
- Partnerships with groups offering financial and physical support
- Host summer BBQ open to anyone interested in the Catholic faith; Fridge magnets with bible verse or thought and parish website as give aways; live music; laying of hands prayers for anyone requesting it
- Ushers should seat late comers toward the back so to decrease disruption

Serving the less fortunate

- Food bank collections
- Develop a St Vincent de Paul society
- Visiting ministries to homebound/sick/lonely – Senior's outreach - Transportation for those unable to drive
- Visible/tangible support to community grps. (Salvation Army; Upper Room; Habitat for Humanity)
- More food and clothing drive initiatives to assist the less fortunate
- Need more reliable information about charitable activities in the parish
- Partnerships with groups offering financial and physical support
- Trained grief counselling for widows and widowers and other bereaved individuals

Education/Catechesis

- Alpha program
- More missions; Workshops/conferences; Expert speakers on timely topics – Sacred covenant with First Nations 2024; Instrumentum Laboris
- A posted or printed synopsis of the homily for later review
- Parish level or Diocesan Zoom mtg with theologians and/or other qualified individuals.
- difficult topics that are seldom addressed
- Word on Fire; Fr. Mike Schmidt; Bishop Baron-Formed Dynamic Catholic; Ascension.
- Coffee talks
- Bible study/ short courses – neighborhood groups “Becoming a catholic if you already are one”
- Exploring our Jewish roots – Seder meal @ Easter
- Religious life talks
- Pro-life – bring back “Baby crib notes”; Christmas tree
- Formalize the Altar Server Program - recruitment
- Sunday school program - expand to grade 4/5; longer time; worksheets for parent follow-up;
- FFC needs consistent and well-structured classes (35) to get through the curriculum

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C. LITURGY

Engagement/opportunity

- Engage the children more in the Mass – eg student led Masses
- Allow altar servers to serve not just stand by – Acolytes as coaches
- Mix up the priests occasionally so each Parish gets to know them - Bring Deacon Paul back
- Ring the church bells before Mass and during the consecration
- Need reconciliation times at OLOV
- Sat. 5pm Mass at OLOV
- Move Sunday Mass at OLOV to 10:00 am - to allow for more family time
- Could there be the availability of a 12:00 or 1:00 Mass somewhere in the area
- Could there be evening Mass during the week for those who cannot attend in the morning
- More missals needed in the pews
- Too many prayers are sung – too long
- Retire the St. James school prayer – add it to the intentions
- Overheads – white background with black lettering more readable; also enlarge the font

Music:

- Fund choirs/musicians to attend conferences to build their repertoire/understanding of sacred music
- Create a youth music ministry
- Music is old and tired, More youthful music
- Have the sound system professionally evaluated and upgraded as needed

Homilies:

- Homily focused to the needs of youth; intentions of youth included in Prayers of the faithful
- discuss how OLOV community could support those in need with specific ideas suggestions

Youth engagement

- Employ a trained Youth Minister to work with all the Parishes to improve and run youth groups school age through young adult
- Develop a teen corner in the Narthex with information, books etc., or a youth space somewhere in the building
- Engage with NET Canada
- Have a young singles group
- Targeted age-appropriate speakers
- Young adult group – skiing, camping, pub nights
- Youth group - helping/serving in the community – senior gardening, moving

If you would like to engage in further discussion and priority setting with the Parish Council, you are invited to attend a meeting on **February 24th at 6:30 pm at OLOV** in the Narthex. Refreshments will be provided.