



# BUILDING OUR FUTURE

*North Parish Building Committee Newsletter*



## PROGRESS UPDATE

*Robert de Roo - Building Committee Chair*

Dear fellow parishioners,

We are nearing the end of our consultation process and we are currently collating all the data together for the various questions we have asked during the consultation period.

Next steps is to process the data, pull out the common themes and also those responses that provide transformational insight into how we can build a church and parish centre that not only meets our needs but also has the ability to inspire us and support our future inspirations.

Once we have collated the information we will be sharing this data back with the parish, so we have an opportunity to reflect on what we have said.

We will also be sharing this information with the architects in the form of a design brief, which will be the next task for the Building Committee.

The importance of this consultation process has been reinforced each time we held sessions with various parish groups as well as the wider parish community, it has allowed us to come together from our previous parishes and interact together as a new parish. At times the discussions have been challenging, but they have also been inspirational.

I will share two of these moments and each of these moments has come from the generational extremes of our community.

**The first inspirational moment** came in our very first session with one of the youth groups.

The first question: ***"What word or words would you use to explain a Catholic Church?"***

A young man from one of our diverse ethnic groups in our parish wrote **"Equal"** on his post-it note and put it on the wall under the question. It was not a response that I had envisaged for his question, and I was curious to understand what was behind his one word response.

***"It is the one place where I feel equal."***

At that moment I felt both elation and sadness. It was fantastic that he feels equal when he is inside a Catholic Church because we are all equal in the face of God, but sadness if this was a reflection on our society if this is the only place where he feels equal.

The next realisation was the extreme importance to the mission we have as a Building Committee to ensure that we create buildings and space around those buildings where all people can feel equal and secure. It is also important that we get to hear from as many diverse people as possible.

**The second inspirational moment** came when we engaged with one of the parish groups, and we had a table of more mature women providing their contributions.

For the last session of the consultation process we have a look at the parish site, and ask people what space/spaces would like to see and this involves thinking about where on the site you would like to see the church located.

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The ladies asked if the church has to be rectangular or cross shaped in its footprint, I stated that we have no predetermined position on this and we are completely open to suggestions.

They talked about it amongst themselves and within 15 mins they came up a shape and design (including doing a 3D cross out of post it notes) which was radically different to anything else that had been presented to date. They had considered all the main spaces in the church and where they would like to seem them placed and it certainly provided an amazing alternative perspective of what could be achieved on the site and highlighted that we need to explore the different in order to understand the beauty of the solution it may provide.

These were just **two** highlights; there were also many other great discussions and ideas being presented.

This engagement process has highlighted that there are many fantastic groups that are doing many inspirational activities supporting one another within the parish and also supporting people outside the parish community.

For those that have come along, on behalf of the Building Committee we say thank you and God bless you for your inputs.

I will finish with a reflection from Pope Francis which talks about Journey in Faith, as this is reflective of the journey we see in building a new church and parish centre for our parish community.

*On 7 June 2013, Pope Francis addressed students of Jesuit schools in Italy and Albania. In the general audience hall, looking out at 9,000 students, alumni, parents and teachers, Francis held up his prepared speech and said: I'm supposed to read this to you, but that could be "a tad boring." Let me give you just the highlights and then take some questions from you, he said.*

*A teenage boy told the pope that he was trying hard to believe in God and be faithful, but that he often struggled with doubt. "What can you say to help me and others like me?" he asked the pope.*

*The life of faith is a journey, Francis answered.*

*"Journeying is an art because if we're always in a hurry, we get tired and don't arrive at our journey's goal," he said.*

*"If we stop, we don't go forward and we also miss the goal. Journeying is precisely the art of looking toward the horizon, thinking where I want to go but also enduring the fatigue of the journey, which is sometimes difficult.... There are dark days, even days when we fail, even days when we fall... but always think of this: Don't be afraid of failures. Don't be afraid of falling. What matters in the art of journeying isn't not falling but not staying down. Get up right away and continue going forward. This is what's beautiful: This is working every day, this is journeying as humans. But also, it's bad walking alone: It's bad and boring. Walking in community, with friends, with those who love us, that helps us. It helps us to arrive precisely at that goal, that 'there where' we're supposed to arrive."*

Thank you, and we look forward to sharing with you the responses we have received from the consultation process. Once we do, we will be able to reflect on what this means for us as a community and the mission we want to be able to support in these new buildings.

We have one final consultation on **Tuesday 13 April, 7pm at Christ the King Centre**. We would love for a good number to come and share your voice in this process.

Praying you have a Blessed and Holy Easter with your families and loved ones.

*Robert de Roo*

## WHERE ARE WE AT?

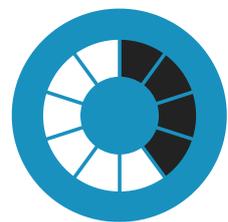
- Complete the consultation process (one final session remaining).
- Collating the information from the consultation process.
  - Identification of common themes as well as those that provoke our thoughts as to what we should be doing in regards to the buildings.
- Engaging with the Diocesan Property Team in regards to the closure of the St Matthew's Church and preparing the site for sale.
- Engaging with St. Patrick's school with the transfer of ownership of the hall from the parish to the school.
- Identification of all artifacts within St Matthew's Church for retention by either the parish or the school for the Chapel to be built on the school site.

- Prepare presentation that pulls the data together and share this with the parish.
- Work with the Diocesan Property Team for the Bryndwr site.
- Continue engagement with schools in regards to the new pastoral centre and church.
- Engage with the Diocesan Office to explore any other potential uses of the new pastoral centre in regards to supporting Diocesan groups or services.
- Prepare design brief for architects

## CONTACT DETAILS

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IN PROGRESS



NEXT STEPS