

**This report gives the full responses written by parishioners in response to questions we asked when we began a dialogue this summer between Forest Catholics about how we can build a sustainable Forest Church community.**

All the responses we received are given here word-for-word as written and unedited. Parishioners were able to send in responses from June to October 2021.

Responses are organised into three Sections, following the questions that we considered. Within Sections 1 and 2, the responses are arranged under the headings of themes that have emerged.

A few responses are duplicated in two themes and marked [*duplicate*] because the respondent's meaning wasn't entirely clear and could fit either category.

Separate responses are marked by a bullet point, like this: • (with dashes (-) or numbers to indicate the respondent's points within their comment, just as they wrote it).

## Section 1

**Q 1. Thinking about our church community, jot down words and phrases that describe: What you like and value What you don't like What you'd like to improve**

## Section 2

**Q 2. What skills and talents can you offer or want to learn so that you can help build up our future Church community?**

## Section 3

**Q 3. How do you think we should deal with increasing environmental/financial pressures and fewer clergy so that we ensure a strong, hopeful future for our Church community?**

**Number of responses received to date, by parish and age group (215 parishioners on roll; reference: Parish Office).**

%age of roll (215)	Parish	Total no. responses	Age 80+	Age 60-79	Age 40-59	Age 25-39	Age 16-24	Under 16	No age given
7.44%	<b>COLEFORD</b>	<b>16</b>	4	12					
5.12%	<b>CINDERFORD</b>	<b>11</b>	1	8	2				
2.33%	<b>LYDNEY</b>	<b>5</b>		2	2	1			
1.40%	<b>All 3 churches</b>	<b>3</b>		3					
2.33%	<b>No parish given</b>	<b>5</b>		2					3
<b>18.60%</b>	<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>			<b>3</b>
	<b>Age group %age share</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	12.50%	67.75%	10.00%	2.50%	0.00%	0.00%	7.50%

**I. Thinking about about our church community, please jot down some words and phrases that describe:**

### **What we like and value**

#### **We like and value our clergy**

- Pope Francis
- I value our caring priest Fr Barnabas.
- A very good and caring parish priest.
- A caring pastoral priest.
- The clergy don't stand on ceremony...they 'muck in' with the rest of us and don't consider themselves a superior breed. *[duplicate]*
- Fr Barnabas' word of God and his example in everyday life and situations as always makes us smile and think.
- We like having a Parish Priest who is approachable and empathetic.
- A caring, kind and considerate priest.
- Priests who treat children as people.
- A good working relationship as a deacon with Fr Barnabas.
- Our priest.
- Approachable parish priest.
- Father Barnabas is a good priest, I like his gentle style of leadership, interesting perspectives, good humour and his homilies.
- We like having a parish priest who is approachable and empathetic.
- Deacon Paul is a blessing - such a thoughtful, gentle and down to earth preacher.
- I support Fr Barnabas' vision that Church is so much more than its buildings.
- Fr Barnabas - in my opinion we are very lucky to have him as our priest.
- 2 good pastors.
- Our priest and deacon.
- Father Barnabas, I see his work and appreciate the hours he gives for all his parish work, to all the churches he ministers to.
- I like and value our sincere and dedicated priest, Fr Barnabas. I respect his wisdom and sincerity. I look forward to his homilies and weekly talks. He has a sense of humour and I enjoy his corny jokes, well most of them! He is forward thinking, encouraging and willing to try new ways. I think we are also blessed to have a deacon in our parish and especially that it happens to be Paul who is a great asset to the parish and no doubt to Fr Barnabas too. Paul has a gentle manner, is supportive, kind, and considerate.

## What we like and value – *continued*

### **We like and value our church community**

- The people are very friendly.
- A friendly congregation.
- Friendly congregation.
- Friendly gatherings.
- Friendliness.
- Friendly parishioners.
- The friendliness of the various churches.
- Friendly interaction with local parishioners.
- Feeling welcome.
- The way people are friendly and supportive to me as a deacon.
- Developing friendships.
- A sense of community.
- small, so feel included.
- Feeling part of community.
- I like supporting the community spirit of churches.
- The sense of community and support.
- A sense of Catholic community.
- We like the church community, its care and concern for others, its friendly approach to all parishioners, old and new.
- The kindness and genuine nature of the people I've got to know well - people of deep faith with whom I can share my faith and learn from too.
- I have always enjoyed visiting, and especially taking Communion out to housebound people.
- That we are starting to have more interaction across the different church communities, people from the different churches are much more likely to know each other than they did 3 years ago.
- I also appreciate the fact that the parish is outward looking and ecumenical.
- Meeting like minded people.
- Coleford church, Hall, car Park and Presbytery. A complete unit.
- Openness.
- Welcoming.
- welcoming (despite any gaps).
- Welcoming atmosphere.
- All the parishioners that I know, but many that I don't.
- Meeting people.
- Welcoming visitors.

## What we like and value - continued

### **We like and value our church community** - continued

- That we have some really good volunteers at each of our churches, although the load is always carried by the same few.
- The effort put in by many parishioners.
- Our volunteers who welcome, clean, maintain, read, minister, visit and care.
- Familiarity of seeing same people weekly at Mass.
- Support of fellow parishioners.
- Opportunities to join various groups.
- Social gatherings and tea and coffee after Mass, harvest soup suppers (CAFOD) (when permitted).
- Our social evenings when they're possible.
- Knowledge that a support network exists for those unable to participate through poor health or age.
- Small but committed, friendly congregation willing to help and support others when needed.
- Newsletter online.
- Sharing our church with others.
- A church to visit and share worship with others.
- I am very grateful for the sense of community that some people do a very good job of helping to nurture.
- Church: the people together not the building.
- LOCAL, EASY TO WALK TO. FRIENDLY & ENTHUSIASTIC. LARGE ENOUGH FOR ANY EVENT. LOTS OF MONEY SPENT ON IMPROVEMENTS.
- I both like and value the church community and the fellowship within. I have become more aware of this throughout the pandemic. It is just lovely to see more and more familiar faces as restrictions have been gradually lifted, even though we are hidden under masks. During the pandemic I have come to know a lot more people within the parish which has been an unexpected pleasure.
- it's good for some people.
- it's always there to go back to.
- I recently moved to the Forest of Dean and am planning to join the RC community and start attending services regularly.
- I am new here and looking forward to get to know more people; I would like to be included and help the church, join the parish and also enjoy some quiet prayer times.

## What we like and value - *continued*

### **We like and value our Faith and worship**

- Mass and ministry available in the Forest - Thank you.
- The availability of mass within 20 minutes of home.
- Mass in person - receiving sacrament of Holy Communion.
- The celebration of Mass.
- The Mass, especially being able to receive Holy Communion.
- The fact that we've been able to attend Mass during the pandemic (with masks).
- The taking of Sacraments.
- The Mass is always such a gift.
- The comfort of attending mass.
- Local area Mass, especially a weekday Mass once a week.
- Convenient Mass times.
- The homilies.
- Homilies not too long and 'to the point'.
- The sermons.
- The simplicity of St Margaret Mary's church.
- I like quiet worship.
- The church is my sanctuary.
- Opportunity for prayer and quiet reflection, away from home Distractions.
- Being part of a congregation on a Sunday. I like the rhythm.
- Being able to share our faith and worship as a community.
- Coming together to worship.
- The feeling of togetherness in our faith.
- A church to visit and share worship with others. *[Coleford]*.
- Sharing faith with friends and family.
- Being inspired to strengthen my faith through the knowledge of the Bible.
- The Faith group is excellent, it's friendly and you learn such a lot.
- The Faith group.
- The existence of faith groups.
- The Diocese's leadership in activities like Proclaim 15 and Dare to Dream, synodality, Root&Branch (opening up opportunities for women's leadership in the Church) and generally modernising.
- The occasional courses and visiting speakers.

**What we like and value - continued****We like and value our Faith and worship** - continued

- The Friday talks.
- Weekly online talks.
- Friday talks online every Friday.
- Recently, the excellent web recordings of Mass and talks.
- Vimeo for Mass when physical attendance not possible.
- That we have risen to the Covid challenge to enable Masses and streaming to happen.
- The online services.
- Online services and talks.
- The ability to attend mass online if I am away for the weekend or unable to attend at the time of service.
- Sunday Mass and in view of the Pandemic the recorded online Masses.
- Hearing hymns and taped singing.
- In normal times, we like the music which accompanies the Mass.
- The recorded music rather than usual singing with available music.
- Music which enhances the Mass and expresses our devotion to God, especially the Gloria, Alleluia and Sanctus.
- Good music and hymns.
- I really like the singing and the music which complement the Mass and add to the sense of sacredness.
- Singing together.
- I like the hymns
- Traditional services.
- All our Church services.
- Church service.
- Many of the old traditions which we have loved from childhood.
- Availability of confession.
- There is nothing in particular that I do not like when attending Mass.

**We like and value our organisation**

- A good Pastoral Council with an excellent chairperson with Pip Deave.

***I. Thinking about about our church community, please jot down some words and phrases that describe:***

### **What we don't like**

#### ***The way we organise ourselves could be better***

- Underutilisation of current buildings.
- Churches situated in inconvenient locations with poor access and seating arrangements.
- Less than ideal state of repair in churches.
- No central base.
- The lack of modern facilities, parking and access to church.
- That the parish is made up of three separate churches and, in my opinion, causes a fragmented community. The skills and abilities are spread unevenly throughout the church community and resources are slimmer as a result. There is a danger of comparing what happens in one church does not happen in another etc.
- Fragmentation of our catholic community.
- Not enough public profile. Local population don't know we are here or what we are about.
- Lack of transparency of Pastoral Council. We need to be kept up-to-date on the difficulties facing the parish before it is a crisis. Current thinking and ideas discussed would be helpful.
- Learning about the existence of the Pastoral Council through the stark and sudden announcement of weekly Mass being axed in the middle of Mass.
- Concern that some ideas and practices are going to lose even more parishioners.
- Just one person running the parish!
- That it is generally the same few lay people who do all the work, we are very lucky they do what they do.
- It is difficult to get in touch with people, if I want to find out something or whatever it seems like I always have to call 2-3 other people first to get the right contact details.
- Being shouted at by local residents in Cinderford due to parking issues.
- Trying to carry on supporting three churches without enough resources.
- That we spend more time discussing physical things to do with buildings than pastoral care or spiritual development. The latter rarely gets mentioned at the pastoral council meeting. Surely this is one of the prime reasons we are here!
- No tea and biscuits before or after the service.
- No provision for young people or children
- The lack of young families.
- not progressive enough.
- huge congregations.

## What we don't like - continued

### **Things about our worship and knowledge of our Faith**

- Reluctance of our bishop to allow more services to be run by deacon and Eucharistic ministers
- We rarely have a Sunday morning Mass, but accept the planing difficulties involved with 4 churches and accept we are fortunate to have the Masses currently available.
- Sermons based on television programs i.e. Global warming topics shown every day on television. Leave it in TV. Of current affairs etc. etc. Perhaps these topics could be presented in a more parochial vein.
- Traditional sermons.
- Not being able to sing, and more congregation.
- The risk that Mass may not be available in the Forest - and the risk that the whole area could go back to over 100 years ago, no priest, Mass or ministry for people.
- Having NO Benediction.
- People are not encouraged to live their faith deeper, for example by going to confessions more often or by taking part in expositions of the Blessed Sacrament. Those both things don't happen very often in FOD Churches.
- Not having a Sunday morning Mass although the Vigil Mass has been a fair compromise.
- No families attending Mass in Lydney/Coleford which makes Mass an older peoples' activity which is a bit depressing with only very few exceptions.
- The absence of children's liturgy.
- Booking a place at Mass instead of first come first serve.
- Second collections Why not have a donation box/plate/basket by door exit instead? The time after Holy Communion is for prayer not getting our money out. It's distracting.
- unable to give my own children (now young adults) any sense of belief.

### **Some of our values and perspectives need sorting out**

- Reluctance of some people to embrace change.
- The 'us' versus 'them' conflicts between churches.
- The fact that some of our members are still lonely and feel unsupported.
- Still a feeling of “my church” rather than “our joint catholic community”.
- Women not allowed to be priests, priests not allowed to marry [whilst married Anglican priests who convert to the Catholic faith are accepted].
- Judgemental.
- Hypocrisy - Vatican riches/food banks.
- Child abusing priests moved to other parishes and Church authorities covered it up.
- Boris Johnson marrying in Catholic ceremony when many Catholic women, who have done nothing wrong pay for the rest of their lives for being abandoned by their husbands.

## What we don't like - continued

### **We don't like feeling weighed down**

- Constantly being told that we are not doing the right things.
- The constant emphasis on gloom and doom.
- Being made to feel responsible for the problems, after all we are the faithful still with the church practising our faith as best we can, as well as trying to be Christian to our families, neighbours and outer community.
- Catholic guilt.
- feeling indoctrinated from a young age.
- PEOPLE TRYING TO CLOSE IT. [*Cinderford church*]
- TALKING DOWN OUR COMMUNITY AND CAUSING DISHARMONY AMONGST US. [*Cinderford church*]

*I. Thinking about about our church community, please jot down some words and phrases that describe:*

## What we'd like to improve

**We'd like to get to know people in our church better and make closer connections with Christians of other denominations**

- We need to get parishioners closer to each other, knowing them by their first names.
- Liaison between the existing churches.
- Replace pews with chairs so that they can be arranged in many different ways according to the form of service and to create a less formal, more welcoming atmosphere for e.g. ecumenical and church and local community activities.
- Three churches that are fragmented and are unable to pray and gather as 'one body in Christ'.
- That we aren't one church community - with the emphasis on community not physical church.
- More interaction between our Parish churches.
- I don't like the resistance to future changes expressed by some parishioners - they should be part of the solution to our future.
- Bring more Catholics, families, young people back into the Faith.
- I miss not having children and young people in our congregation.
- Having nowhere to socialise in Lydney after Mass.
- Social contact after the service.
- Some people are sort of distant and formal as if they're not really engaged in our community of faith but sort of involved in a business.
- That we are unable to attend to the needs of parishioners as we do not have the resources, which include people resources.
- The website. It's all stiff and starchy and doesn't look very welcoming at all, especially not for younger people and young families. Plus there are so few contact details on there. For newcomers and other interested people it doesn't speak to the Glory of God, the joy and blessings of our Faith, an active, friendly community etc. It looks more like a corporate noticeboard for insiders!
- More present to local communities.
- Services for special occasions open to all.
- I often feel we aren't out there like other faiths, that we are hidden away from the world, of this I don't like and maybe the answer is to be diocese more in touch with the modern world.
- Meetings involving speakers, not only Catholics but of other denominations.
- Some interdenominational services to share worship with all Christians.
- Exploration of other religions.
- More ecumenism with other Christians.
- Better links with other Christian churches with sharing of services and spaces.
- Lack of greater ecumenism with other Christians.
- ? Teaming up with the Anglicans where possible?
- Like to 'see' more community projects funded by the Church < Vatican riches.

## What we'd like to improve - *continued*

### **We'd like to be better organised and communicate well**

- Centralisation of church community.
- It would be lovely to have things in one place and share the space as well as the priest.
- Pooling of resources.
- Less waste of money and resources by continuing to keep open all our buildings.
- Centralise our money, resources in a church build for purpose with facilities for:
  - Community events
  - Parking
  - Technology
  - Children and family services

*I don't care where the church is located; just do it!!*
- *That we become ONE.* [duplicate]
- Greater participation by parishioners in the voluntary work necessary to ensure that our churches might function properly. More time for our priest to perform his pastoral functions.
- More people taking small active roles.
- Higher profile. Openness and visibility.
- Work out ways to encourage young families and younger people to come to church and take part in running things because they are absolutely vital to the future of our church.
- We need a Preparedness Plan so that we can help those who need support during extraordinary/emergency events - not just for pandemics but also severe weather, buildings problems, local outbreaks of flu, parishioners' illness etc. (Who actually looked first to our church community for help when the Covid lockdowns started?)
- Revitalisation of the SVP. [St Vincent de Pail chapter]
- Accessibility to Mass and other services for the elderly and housebound.
- Return to lunch club or other activities for elderly.
- An open debate on how we will attend Mass and feel protected while "living with Covid".
- Is the questionnaire being made available to those not able to attend Mass?
- Development of database and better communication to allow more easy support of those in need.
- Regular use of lift shares or community transport.
- transport for those without &/or to minimise car parking/car miles.
- Not being left behind because of up-to-date computer equipment and skills.
- being inclusive.
- Name badges so we get to know people better at socials.
- That we don't have a team to do the garden maintenance at St Joseph's outside the grass cutting. It would be nice to have a couple of people who kept the other aspects- brambles, ivy etc. - under control.
- time.

## What we'd like to improve - *continued*

### **We'd like to be better organised and communicate well** - *continued*

- More communication and meetings with the Pastoral Council not just AGM, so we know what the situation is.
- Pastoral Council minutes being made available to all the parishioners (perhaps they are but I just don't know).
- How is the PPC working on sorting out what to do about the situation of fewer priests and parishioners and unsustainable buildings? Is that on their job description?
- More transparency with PPC. Knowing all that is happening within our Church.
- The Parish Pastoral Council. What does it do? It seems like it's so quiet and secretive. What's their remit? I'd like to read the records of the meetings just to see what they do but I don't know how to get hold of them.
- Some financial info to enable us to understand the extent of the problems for the future.
- Clear guidance and communication.
- feeling confused.
- Better understanding of local and national rules and responsibilities.
- FIND OUT WHY PEOPLE AREN'T ATTENDING MASS (PRE COVID)
- A unified church community where we can share all resources and are therefore better able to support each other across the board. This is particularly important as we are an aging community and consequently less people can take on volunteer roles. Elderly parishioners have contributed and, I am aware, some feel guilty for not continuing in a visible ministry when unseen they support the church in their private prayers, which is invaluable. Young families are few and they are spread out amongst the churches this can make them feel isolated especially the children.

Unfortunately, there are the same volunteers who are coping with all the tasks that support the separate church communities, I wonder if we get stuck in a cycle when we see the same faces taking care of church business and feel that we may be intruding on someone else's patch if we step in! To avoid this scenario perhaps a list of tasks needed to run the churches could be displayed in each church noticeboard. It may be that someone has a particular skill they were not aware is required. Even if those tasks already have a volunteer there is always a need for back-up. To this end I suggest that tasks all have a revolving time-period as the more everyone knows about the workings of the church the smoother the day to day running will be. If parishioners are willing to give their time but lack the confidence or skills, the church community should be prepared to support them through coaching or training.

There is a further need for various pastoral ministries to allow Fr Barnabas to concentrate more on his Priestly duties. Church ministries should be viewed as a part of fulfilling the mission of the church in passing on our faith. Along these lines perhaps all volunteers should be given a blessing and 'sent out', no task being too small or inconsequential for this. A structured network of volunteers would be helpful with a training or renewal programmes as necessary. Perhaps an annual celebration thanksgiving Mass and meal for all volunteers, seen and unseen?

## What we'd like to improve - *continued*

### We'd like to be better organised and communicate well - *continued*

- The Parish Pastoral Council - suggestions to help support the role of the PPC and to stop their tasks becoming overwhelming:
  - Does the PPC have a definition of their role?
  - Does the PPC have time to undertake the responsibilities of ministries; that they are adhering to correct practice and that time is made to train and enhance these ministries?
  - Are other teams/groups needed to address other roles in the church to then report to the PPC?
  - Does the PPC work well together, could team-building days help to encourage togetherness?
  - Can members say what they think, as healthy difference of opinion is good as they are all working to the same goal?
  - Does the PPC pray and ask the Holy Spirit for help before making Decisions?

### We'd like to improve the values of our Church and their practice

- Love, Kindness, Respect.
- That we become ONE. [*duplicate*]
- Encourage independence; creativity.
- Catholic education system - should be based on the ideas of Jesus, not capitalism and 'the old boy network'.
- Hesitate to say this but our church wouldn't win any prizes for diversity and equality (some of the attitudes I've heard are really embarrassingly out of the 1950s, and offensive. Possibly unlawful in secular situations.)
- More inclusivity.
- Become more outward looking.
- More welcoming to all.
- Not to be told that we are doing the wrong things.
- Don't emphasise doom and gloom.
- Please get the egos out of the way. They're a big part of what's holding our churches back. It's really off-putting. Undermining efforts to encourage new people to take part in doing things and making a closer and more open, welcoming community.

### We'd like to improve our church premises

- A church building that we are really proud of, is fit for purpose, environmentally friendly, cheap to run, beautiful, flexible for multi purpose use and an example to others.
- Better church premises so as to make Mass attendance a more attractive experience - good transport links and better parking.
- WATERPROOF BACK WALL. [*Cinderford*]

## What we'd like to improve - *continued*

### **We'd like to develop our worship and knowledge of our Faith**

- After Mass to be encouraged to stay to thank God for this miracle which Jesus gives us. ONLY 10 MINS.
- Have more opportunity for Adoration Praying Rosary and Divine Mercy Chaplet as a group, perhaps before or after Mass.
- Faith teaching, on line videos - to discuss. Fr Alar on You Tube is very good.
- back to longer service etc.
- To ensure or enable Mass to continue to be available in the Forest for future generations, as far as possible.
- A Well Being Team - a care team that is attached to the Welcomers who can assist those in need [of help and guidance during services].
- Bringing more Catholics back to church - hence bigger congregations.
- A library in church porch?
- Get people to accept and develop a love of the other liturgies available as well as Mass.
- The Offertory - could this involve all parishioners, especially children?
- Children's Liturgy - to cater for the children's understanding of the Mass and to allow their parents time to 'breathe' in Mass.
- Ministerial Teams that support and help others to take up a ministry in the church. So this becomes 'normal' to give your gifts to the church.
- Adding new ministries to our existing ones, for example: a Funeral Ministry.
- A Choir to enable us to better praise and worship God.
- I very much miss sung Gloria, Alleluia and Sanctus, and frankincense.
- More community-led functions and services to allow others to experience God's love.
- A 'Book Club' - could this happen before Mass so people could have a reading beforehand and could then come and discuss what it could mean? Specifically, 1st and 2nd readings to help with parishioners' understanding of Scripture (perhaps 20-30minutes).
- Church Services - for different events that could include more family-orientated involvement.
- I don't know if there are active prayer groups, for healing, special occasions, those who have passed, thanksgiving and so on.
- Identify the needs to be filled in developing peoples' Faith and making them more confident to talk about it.
- Get better visibility and understanding of what the Faith group do.
- Set up another Lectio Divina group independent of the current one.
- I ought to join the Faith Group to listen to other people's views.
- More help to develop our faith.
- Can we remember by name the year's mind on the nearest appropriate date of those parishioners who have died? So that we can pray for their souls and appreciate those we knew.

**What we'd like to improve - continued****We'd like to develop our worship and knowledge of our Faith - continued**

- After Covid restrictions have been lifted we would welcome a return to some more informative video-supported talks on relevant topics e.g. the good series on Old Testament history and explanations about the relevance of covenants and prophets. Maybe something on the lives of prominent saints.
- Cradle Catholics have been told how rudimentary the Catechism classes of the past were. But it was better than nothing and attending Mass and all the other church services throughout their lives they have acquired a huge store of knowledge which they are not confident in sharing. In my view talking with others, exploring articles of faith and Scripture regularly helps confidence to grow and helps us become aware of what gaps we have in our own knowledge and so explore further. Opportunity for social gatherings that include perhaps a short talk followed by discussion time to share our faith in small groups. The Faith group, Lectio Divina and the Lent talks are great examples. (Accompanied, of course, by tea and cakes!)
- Although I learned Latin at school and am very grateful for that, it is an exclusive language. It is dauntingly incomprehensible to the vast majority. In our modern times, when people expect transparency (and when our tabloid newspapers, bought by scores of millions of people, are written for readers with a reading age of around 8 years old), I would strongly suggest that the Church replaces exclusive Latin vocabulary with inclusive English or, at the very least, uses English terms alongside Latin.

**We'd like more fun events together as a community!**

- How about an "ol' sing-song" round the old Joanna in the Hall when we meet or a recital of favourite poems (polite ones of course!)
- More organised social activities.
- More get-together, and a Draw to make money for church.
- Church obviously has a serious, reverent purpose, but all communities need lots of fun activities too so that they strengthen social bonds and nurture confidence in their unique identities.
- Fundays:
  - for families, and organised trip so they may join more in fellowship.
  - for parishioners so they may become more acquainted with each other.
- It would be nice to have more social meetings, quizzes, afternoon teas etc.

**We'd like to improve our hopes for the future**

- The uncertainty about the way forward, I wish I knew the answer but I don't!
- Sadly, if no solution is found, all our churches could follow Sedbury and there would no longer be a 'Forest Church'.

**Some of us are not sure about improvements**

- Again, no creative suggestions
- There are no specific areas to note to improve.

## What we'd like to improve - *continued*

### **Improvements? It's all good!**

- Nothing - we're a mixed bunch of wonderful people - so what's not to like.
- It is all good.
- Nothing really!

### **We'd like more activities for children and young people**

- Encouragement and support for young families.
- Video links are helping to move within the times, to help our youth understand the teachings of our church, perhaps a greater present day approach.
- A broader social activity for the youth.
- Lay people recruited to help in dioceses “paid” the younger element may be willing to study a little theology and partake in events, now money is more orientated in the young some form of reward would be a help.
- More for children and young ones so more go to keep church going.
- The Offertory - could this involve all parishioners, especially children? *[duplicate]*
- Children's Liturgy - to cater for the children's understanding of the Mass and to allow their parents time to 'breathe' in Mass. *[duplicate]*
- Children's liturgy provision (consider paid role perhaps for young person?).
- I have a 5 year old daughter and I would really appreciate children's services/Bible/church activities so she can join in too.
- age range.
- If we are to pass on our faith to the younger generations, we need to attract more young families into the church. Our parish needs to become a place where families want to go to. I believe that young families that attend FoD churches do feel welcomed and valued but we could start a youth club, cubs, brownies, birthday parties etc. It would also be beneficial if younger people were invited to become involved in the workings of the church as members of the PPC or other leadership initiatives so that they share their vision and can lay the foundations for the future as there is no school or church Catechism classes I'd like to see a pathway to support parents passing on their faith to the children for example from Baptism to First Holy Communion to Altar servers to Confirmation to Eucharistic Minister, Welcomer...with all the benefits of expanding their faith within their families along that journey.

**2. Each of us has many skills, some are well-practised and others are developing. What skills and talents can you offer or want to learn so that you can help build up our future Church community?**

**I can do this!**

- I feel I'm offering as much as I can.  
If I had the luxury of a little more time.....
- I am more of a follower rather than a leader. I like to be a supporter by helping people to achieve their goals. This may be providing transport, as I like driving.
- Mass reading and conducting services in an emergency including distribution of Holy Communion.
- I love any manual work, I speak Czech and English, I also have quite good computer skills.
- Would be happy to help as a reader, welcomer or cleaner.
- Already providing music and technical services and happy to continue with this.
- My work involves a lot of public speaking, so happy to help with readings.
- We are willing to clean the church on a regular rota basis as long as we do it on our own time, not confined to a group.
- BUILDING REPAIRS & ELECTRICAL REPAIRS + FUNDRAISING EXPERIENCE.
- Perhaps spend some time being a server to help with the understanding of the Mass and to acknowledge more my humility coming before God.
- My working life was in Personnel Management and as a National Officer for a trade union - negotiating terms and conditions of work and employment, and representing individual members. This was a long time ago but if you think useful let me know and I will consider if I can help. I'm very out of date!
- My time in this world is numbered. I can only offer my PRAYERS, as poor as they are!
- I have been Trained as a Church Reader, Eucharistic Minister and I sing. In the past I have helped with Flower Arranging. I am on the Pastoral Council.
- Prayer Ministry.
- The Sedbury area of the parish is easily accessible to me, so if anyone needs help at this side I will be happy to give it. All being well I should be able for this for a few more years, although I realise that I'm actually pretty old!
- 
- British Sign Language

**I can do this!** - continued

- Giving a lift to Mass for those no longer able to drive themselves.
- Being able to take Holy Communion to the housebound or chronically sick even at short notice (hospital patients when a pastor is not available).
- I already offer my services in several areas.
- Reading.
- Eucharistic Minister.
- [I want to learn and master] bereavement counselling skills to help anyone in need of them.
- I'm not sure about this, so I pray: Giver of All Good Gifts, open my mind to see how best to share my talents and treasures. (From Joyce Rupp in Boundless Compassion).
- I know I am old 86. But watch over the young, be generous with your time to plant Faith and Love, and Pray, for your example will nourish the future young people.

**Ask me, I'll do the best I can!**

- Tell me what you want of me and I will do my best to do it.
- Not all of us have specific talents and skills to offer and are no longer young and confident, but are willing to help in what is needed as long as we are asked.
- Happy to help however I can around full-time employment plus 2 other volunteering roles.
- Tell me what needs doing and I'll gladly help where I can offer something.
- As my help would be ltd. due to my disability I would always offer to help in any way I could.
- I've suggested some things I could help to do but mostly they weren't taken up. Is there someone I could speak to who organises volunteers, who does what, what needs doing, health and safety, code of conduct etc?
- We each of us has something to offer, but also certain limitations, just to be allowed to give our best and not feel any guilt that we should be doing more.
- Sadly, at this present moment, I'm unable to do much due to waiting for a hip replacement. I can still drive at the moment.

**I have other thoughts!**

- A more of a business approach to build resources financing lucrative income. Example renting a premises for charity purposes with a percentage of profits for churches, and a corner for snacks, coffee, teas.
- Meetings for communications, discussion and debate.
- I have an O Level in Woodwork.
- Pass for now - thank you.
- What happened to the skills audit that we filled in a few years ago? There are lots of talented and accomplished people in our parishes who perhaps could be more involved.

3. *Our Forest churches are quickly becoming financially and environmentally unsustainable, and the Diocese has fewer and fewer priests to go round. These problems will worsen so we need to make creative plans now. How do you think we should deal with this situation so that we ensure a strong, hopeful future for our Church community?*

### Our ideas for making a hopeful, sustainable future for our Church community

- I support Fr Barnabas' vision that Church is so much more than its buildings.
- We have to reduce the number of churches - hopefully step by step. Live streaming of Masses will help but we must keep our community together and not become a large number of singletons with their own PC/iPad etc. Reducing the churches should encourage car sharing (COVID permitting) which will encourage knowing thy neighbour.
- Lets have one church building in the Forest with a minibus to pick people up who can't get to wherever it is situated, not all parishioners drive or have available transport. Church Hall and Large Car Park essential.

### “Hope that the Church will always be there for people.”

- In my opinion the best solution for the church community would be to unite as one parish community within one church. As a united community we would share the best of the resources, skills and abilities right across the Forest. This would also benefit in a mix of ages and abilities to support the needs of each other, and the practical tasks required to run a church.
- To move forward and not feel we are left behind. Have one church to worship in, good parking, modern warm church hall so we can have more social events, allow other to join us.
- We think that the best way forward is to have one church in the Forest, with a hall and good parking facilities, this may entail building from scratch and selling the existing churches to fund the new buildings. There would then be two churches - Newent and the Forest.
- Would it be feasible to have one church building with some sort of outreach facilities - transport is always an issue. A garden would be good. This could involve the local community - growing veg for sharing - flowers for church.
- Reduce our reliance upon physical buildings in the Forest. Church properties are expensive to run and maintain. We should be prepared to close at least one, and possibly two of the existing Forest churches. Were we to have just one Forest church then expenditure could be reduced substantially.  
If that church could be in a central location and be a multi-purpose building then significant benefits might result. Combining one physical church with greater use of broadcast technology seems to offer the best possible solution.
- **A** Church to allow us to come together as the 'Body of Christ'. So that we may pray together and serve and enrich the lives of our parish and community. Together as one we might then have the people resources to make our Church fit for purpose. **A** Church now would ensure that there is a Church in the Forest for future generations which could serve parishioners and the wider community.

## Our ideas for making a strong, sustainable future for our Church community

- continued

- I guess the answer will be one Mass centre, somewhere central, much as we all love our own particular church. This could make the problem of travelling as many of us drivers are getting too the age where we may not be able to drive.  
Possibly more online services could help as we've had during lockdown, for which we have been so Grateful.
- One place where people can meet regularly for the worship or events and have opportunity to get to know each other.
- Coleford is a complete unit, church, hall, car park and priest's house.
  - Lydney church has space for further development if funds allow.
  - Cinderford has poor parking options and the 'playground' may not always be available. No church hall, no presbytery.
  - Should we be more involved with other denominations, ecumenically? Bible study, socials, prayer groups?
  - Would love to see more evening talks and discussions as we had 2 years ago (Covid willing).
- The loss of parking facility in Cinderford which will shortly happen with the development of St Anthony's School building will be a good opportunity to rationalise the number of churches to be maintained. 3 churches would enable each to have a regular Sunday Mass with mini-coach transport perhaps from Cinderford to Coleford or Newent for those unable to travel by car. A regular Sunday Mass in Lydney would ease the space constraints in Coleford and make winter services less hazardous for older parishioners.
- Sell Our Ladys for development and either build a small church in Cinderford or share a local church. (I am a member of the Cinderford Congregation.)
- COLEFORD church was built the year I was born (5 years before the next one). So it's the Mother church. We are the smallest but that could be changed.
- For enhanced fundraising initiatives for Church use.
- For prayers directed at Vocations for Priesthood.
- Clarify the financial needs, so that those of us who can afford can increase their donations.
- Possibly delegate more tasks between parishioners.
- Make people aware of how and when they can come to the church, some of them might be timid. Advertising our church more.
- Perhaps it would be good idea to make some links or co-operate with missionarists like some other countries in Europe do.
- Services that can be lead by a Eucharistic Minister.
- Afternoon tea for the people on their own, for members of the community.
- **START USING OLOV FOR EVENTS WHICH APPEAL TO ALL THE DISENFRANCHISED CATHOLICS THAT USED TO ATTEND MASS REGULARLY. LISTEN TO THE PARISHIONERS!**
- We are comparatively new to the parishes. I am therefore making it an excuse to avoid answering this one.

## Our ideas for making a strong, sustainable future for our Church community

- continued

- UNITE WITH OTHER CHRISTIAN CHURCHES.  
POPE FRANCIS TRIES!
- I have seen other non-Catholic churches having successfully developed family services, which include far more involvement of the young children and modern technology, e.g. screens for the words of the hymns etc.
- Inform parishioners of the tasks involved in preparing Mass, the upkeep of the Church and grounds. If parishioners do not know what is involved in the upkeep of the Church how can they know where to offer their services. Could a list be prepared to make them aware where they could offer their gifts and encourage everyone to take on a small part? That new parishioners can see that it is normal to participate and be involved in the Church.
- Make greater use of technology and provide access to Masses and other church services through a robust and easily accessible internet offering, expanding on the present Vimeo service. Outside of normal Masses, remote accessibility to Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals all have potential to enable greater participation on the part of the faithful.
- To use the deacons and elders of the church to lighten Father Barnabas' work. Use of trainee priests from college etc. maybe an idea. Open study groups for the community to participate i.e. to learn about being a Catholic and their teachings.
- SUSTAINABLE DIOCESE  
Allowing priests to marry. To help with the updating of the church. This will portray more normality approachable diplomatic realistic view helping the youth more confidence to join the priesthood.  
I have attempted to offer my humble respectfully limited ideas intentionally not too unrealistic. Wishing from my heart Father Barnabas every success with this survey. *[This sentence duplicate]*
- IDEAS
  - Catholic nursery/primary/secondary provision in FOD.
  - Stronger ecumenical links and partnerships, e.g. Jonathan Keir prayer groups, CofE Onelife Project.
  - Church building to include: community cafe and workspace, community shop, pre-school nursery, youth, singles, elderly, employed, unemployed etc. provision.
  - and church bus providing all of the above.
  - Legislate for better connectivity and IT to enable live-streaming. Ensure live-stream loneliness does not become a feature.
  - Community transport
  - Welcome non-Catholic family and friends as part of the community.
- One church with access and parking.
  - Needs to be on a bus route.
  - Lifts arranged for those that need them.
- I would like to see an 'outside church'; eco-friendly structure (rather than building); in a forest setting, in touch with nature; surrounded by a community garden. A multi-use space for other projects of a set eco-sustainable ethos.\*  
I'm not a big fan of large numbers/quantity of people=success. Success can be measured in a variety of different ways.  
\*A structure that can be 'opened' up - doors opened to the outside.

## Our ideas for making a strong, sustainable future for our Church community

- continued

- I tried looking online to see if I could find anything new and helpful from other parishes in the [same?] situation - no joy, I'm afraid.
  - Is the Pastoral Council liaising with others to see how they are coping and to hopefully learn from them?
  - What can we learn from Newent?
  - Presumably, the Pastoral Chairman and Father Barnabas are in some sort of discussions with the Bishop - what is being discussed?
  - The closure of the school in Cinderford may have had an impact on children and parents and their faith. How do we go about reconnecting with these families? They are the Church's future.
  - Please publish ways we can give our collection to the parish and how to Gift Aid even, through a Standing Order.
  - How does a parish work without a priest able to celebrate Mass?
  - Married Anglican priest converts are allowed - why not married Catholic priests?
  - Enhance role of deacons.
  - Women deacons. Women chaplains.
  - Thank you for all the trouble taken to gather in information from us. Even if some of the answers are difficult to evaluate, there is no doubt that it will have fulfilled one of your aims - to raise awareness of the issues facing the parish and therefore generating some debate.

## Our ideas for making a strong, sustainable future for our Church community

- continued

- **My views on the Forest churches, and what we should do in the future:**

First, I must say that I am cheeky to be filling this in, since I don't live in the Forest, and am limited in the things I can take part in. But I do attend Lydney church regularly. I enjoy being part of this parish for various reasons: the people are friendly, and the clergy don't stand on ceremony. Obviously their roles are different, but they 'muck in' with the rest of us, and don't consider themselves a superior breed. I also appreciate the fact that the parish is outward looking and ecumenical.

As to what I can do, as I mentioned, this is limited. But I have always enjoyed visiting and taking Communion out to housebound people. The Sedbury area of the parish is easily accessible to me, so if anyone needs help at this side, I will be happy to give it. All being well, I should be able for this for a few more years, although I realise that I'm pretty old!

So, what do we need? Eucharistic services do not seem to be approved of in this diocese, but the time is going to come when these will provide our only regular access to the Eucharist. So I think we need more training for the laity in presiding at these. We also need to get away from the emphasis on the Mass as the only acceptable service. We could have lovely prayer services for special occasions, both sad ones and those for which we wish to offer thanksgiving. We need to involve creative and artistic people in these (I am unfortunately not one of those) to create services which are spiritual and inspirational. And they wouldn't always need to take place in a church. Above all, in my view, we could arrange beautiful and prayerful General Absolution services. We and our bishops need to remember that individual confession as a general rule became normal only in mediaeval times, and there are other ways of receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Our Bishops in Britain are particularly lily-livered, and will not rock any boats until they have retired, and they are not risking their jobs. But it is interesting how many of them do speak out (in *The Tablet*) once they become 'emeriti', and presumably their pensions are safe!

On that point, who can blame them?

However, Pope Francis has recommended **synodality**, and if our Bishops will not make their own decisions, perhaps the priests and the laity should start experimenting themselves. A bit of rebellion would just add life to the Church, which is at present in its death throes. And if we want the Church to continue, we have to find ways of involving younger people. Most of them have voted with their feet anyway, but could be recaptured if they saw anything to inspire them in our churches. We have to start doing our 'own thing' and risk hierarchical disapproval. This has happened in the past, with such things as the Liverpool Pastoral Congress, and the fact that many priests continued to pack their churches for inspiring services of General Absolution well after the permission was withdrawn. (Yes, I know I'm a bit obsessional on this topic, but I promise I won't even start on women's ordination!) But, as time went on and very little changed, the young people decided it wasn't worth fighting, and walked away. We have to keep the few that are left, or there is no future.

Enough from me! You have my details on file.

## Our ideas for making a strong, sustainable future for our Church community

- continued

### • Additional Comments to Dialogue I

Before one can try to improve a situation perceived as being unsatisfactory it is absolutely essential to ask the question “why and how have we ended up in our present situation?”.

My answer to that would be that for too long the church hierarchy has given very poor leadership and attempts at piecemeal solutions at parish level are doomed to failure, without better leadership from above. The Church has lost its spirituality and become just another organisation with a social conscience.

The first commandment is “love the Lord our God with your whole mind etc.” This is the Church's first task, the love thy neighbour only comes next and should follow from a strong spirituality. Indeed, it is perfectly possible to obey this second commandment completely without the Church, as many people do.

Unfortunately, this has led to at least two lost generations that were never properly inculcated with a deep knowledge and love of their religion. I can remember my oldest child, (who is now 55 years old) complaining that he did not want to be taught sociology in his supposed religious education at school. That is the time to instil a love of religion and religious practice into the young. Jesuit tradition is right “give me the child and I will give you the man”. This is where the rot set in, education, education, education, and a lack of leadership in it.

As a committed, church going Christian I am tired of being told that the Church is not for its members. This is hardly a good message to put out for evangelisation as it begs the question, then why bother to join? I am disappointed in the lack of Christian unity and any serious attempts to properly address it in a humble and inclusive way.

Turning to more down to earth and practical problems within our parish, I would say that they are far from unique. In almost 60 years of married life, I have been a member of 5 different parishes, and have seen the same problems arise and gradually worsen. The problems stem from constantly falling congregations, and I have already said what I consider that is due to. So, how do we solve our problems here in this parish?

To state the obvious, the problem is 3 church buildings and too small a congregation to support them. So what are the essentials if we are to reduce to a single building? They are:

1. A church building that is sufficiently large to accommodate the current congregation and allow for possible increase in the congregation (God willing). The building must also be in such a state that it does not require excessive maintenance and running costs.
2. Suitable accommodation for our parish priest, i.e. a Presbytery.
3. Sufficient parking space to allow for the additional travel involved by having one location to which all parishioners must travel. With the state of public transport and the age of our parishioners, car use is the only way.
4. Ideally, a parish hall attached to or in close proximity to the church.

If we consider our existing locations under those headings then none of them satisfy all the criteria.

Cinderford has an attractive, traditional church that, unfortunately, is in poor repair and would require considerable expense to maintain. There is no presbytery, suitable parking or parish hall.

Lydney also has an attractive, modern church that is probably just sufficient in size and probably with low maintenance costs. There is no presbytery or parish hall and the car park is too small, although it could probably be extended.

*Continued /*

## Our ideas for making a strong, sustainable future for our Church community

- continued

### Additional Comments to Dialogue I - continued

Coleford has an adequate church that is probably just sufficient in size and , as far as I know, has no major structural problems. It has a presbytery and church hall but insufficient parking space, with no way of extending it, as far as I'm aware.

Summarising all that then, none of the existing sites are ideal. Is it possible to dream of a new, single site? As parishioners we simply do not have sufficiently detailed information to comment on that. Is the parish in debt, and if so is that debt growing or is it solvent, and if so is that solvency improving or deteriorating? Would the sale of the existing 3 sites raise sufficient money to be able to purchase one site and construct what would be required? Father Barnabas said, in his web introduction to this consultation, "be careful or the bishop will decide", whatever we do or say the bishop will decide anyway. That is how the Church works. As far as I know all three sites are, technically, owned by the Diocese, not by the parish so it is time for some leadership from above, and some signs, please, from even higher above.

## Our ideas for making a strong, sustainable future for our Church community

- continued

- Unless absolutely necessary churches should remain open for as long as possible - but no, enduring financial debt cannot be incurred for the future. How 'quickly' churches may become 'unsustainable', I do not know. Or if there will be any appeal post-pandemic which would achieve any period of financial stability for a time, I do not know. But if I were to look at a blank piece of paper for the long term, to help enable Mass to continue in the Forest, I would consider redeveloping the largest plot of land the Diocese have here. The revenue raised from the sale of sites which became unsustainable, if that happened, would be 'ring-fenced' to help with there development. I see this land as St Joseph's @ Lydney, at this point (rightly or wrongly). The principal would be to:
  - a) re-build or extend existing, to provide a large eco-friendly, sustainable church.
  - b) the site would provide car parking spaces only for disabled persons and priest. Lydney has a well established and large public car park very near by - free on Sundays and after 6pm on Saturdays.
  - c) the site would provide apartment style, say 2 bedroom living accommodation for a priest plus a small private outdoor space manageable for him.
  - d) the site would provide a meeting room/hall type area and toilet facilities. Also an administrator's office area.
  - e) I would ask the church to fund and provide a minibus type transport link with pick-up points in various hamlets. Yes, some lifts would go on as they do now BUT not everyone is available at the times needed or all of the time and peoples' circumstances change. Which can make other people dependent rather than enabling them to get to Mass independently on transport provided - that's an Outreach in itself I feel.
  - f) Overall, this looks like it would mean broadly North Forest there could be Mass at Newent and broadly South there could be Mass @ Lydney. And those who didn't have transport and no one available to give them a lift regularly, would be enabled to attend Mass thro' a church transport link.
  - g) Again overall, in time there may be a need to consider an extension to Our Lady of Lourdes church @ Newent. Those living more North of the Forest may choose to attend mass there.

Whatever the long term solution is, people will always have to travel distances for Mass.

**“My overriding concern is that this area does not “fall through the gap” as it has in history, with no Catholic ministry or Mass available for people.”**

That's all I can think about right now to answer your enquiries. So thank you!

## Our ideas for making a strong, sustainable future for our Church community

- continued

- It seems obvious that there are only enough parishioners (especially those who are willing and able) in the Forest to fill and run one church building now. Certainly only one priest can't be expected to be forever on the road travelling.

It's of note that the Methodists have always had an efficient circuit system of churches around which the Minister travels. As I understand it, that's possible because many more parishioners actively take almost all the responsibility for maintaining and organising their own churches, which is what we lack in our Church. In our current situation, I think the admin alone for 3-4 churches must be a nightmare to keep on top of and very expensive.

So, we need to replace scattered churches with one accessible, good quality, modern church building where the maintenance would be low/easier and with energy efficient, cheaper and sustainable power systems. Such an integrated building would offer flexible spaces to allow for many more community activities like a cafe, a reading/library/meeting room, Sunday school, play groups, community services like clubs/drop-ins for people with various needs and interests such as Adult Education, exercise and other community group meetings (both for parishioners and for others in the wider community.)

Equally, if not more important, is that we would then be a united Body of Christ, spiritually as well as in practical, community terms. Another essential is adequate car parking that doesn't annoy the neighbours, together with a well-organised lift schedule which includes a church minibus. Remember: 'If you build it, they will come!' And if you build it well, such a church would become a great asset to the whole community.

Overall, I think our church needs to be much better organised, outward looking, confident, inclusive, willing and able to share the Gospel, and become far more ecumenical in practical and spiritual terms. But to do that, our Church in the Forest needs to get its own house in order first, to get properly organised so that such administrative efficiency and cost savings free up time and energy to welcome and engage with the wider community, to reach out to non-active Catholics, and new people and their families.

It's also obvious to very many throughout the world, that the time has come to open up priestly vocations for married priests and women but, unfortunately, that'll take much more time than we apparently have to sort out our problems.

## Our ideas for making a strong, sustainable future for our Church community

- continued

### • Thoughts on how to deal with problems to secure a better future

I believe we should strive to draw our community together and move forward as one united group. We should pool our resources to make better use of them and, with renewed strength, attract new people and become a vibrant part of the forest community as a whole. I would like to see better links, sharing and mutual support with other Christian churches.

Our future requires young people and I would love to be able to encourage young families to attend services designed for them.

It would be great to offer a variety of services and religious activities as well as conventional mass with the priest.

This would require more leadership from perhaps Eucharistic ministers and other lay people and perhaps invited people from outside such as retreat leaders or speakers.

I feel we should develop our community spiritually and socially so that we feel a mutual solidarity going forward. Member-led, this revitalised Catholic Church will rely less on the parish priest

Our church is not about the buildings but I do feel that they are integral to our successful future. One building in a central location would be sustainable and use of one of our existing sites would be sensible.

We have been told by the diocese that building a new church would cost around 2 million, so a more realistic option would be to develop one of our buildings using money raised through the sale of the others.

Cinderford church is not suitable for development due to its condition, position and lack of space around it and no parking.

Coleford is a central location, has sufficient space for development and additional parking nearby. The possibility of sharing with Church of England and Baptists is being explored.

Lydney could be developed more cheaply and is in a prominent location in the town which is growing rapidly. It is not, however, central in the forest, but does this really matter?

It could be converted to encompass modern environmentally friendly heating, solar panels, car parking, community garden, multi-use space, etc. It could be made into something beautiful and showcase local art and music.

I envisage use of our own or preferably existing community transportation. This would add to social interaction and development of bonds.

I would like to feel part of a progressive, supportive group who have become stronger in their faith and is seen to be active, collaborative and useful in the local community.

*NB needs editing for final report version? I don't know how it is intended to fit into the 3 question format of this document.*

## **Using our God given gifts at the Service of the Church**

**|Through our Baptism all are called to share in the life and mission of the Church. |**

What would be good in our Parish of four Churches?

- A named contact in each Church  
Someone in each Church to oversee who is sick, who is missing, who needs Communion/a visit  
Items need to get to each Sunday Mass; newsletters, papers, Bidding Prayers, Wine & Hosts, envelopes etc.  
People to write the Bidding Prayers  
A Liturgy group to include the four Churches
- Sacramental preparation; People to help/run First Communion preparation, Confirmation, Converts (R.C.I.A)
- Communication, website, Facebook etc
- Cinderford: People to organise Children's Liturgy
- Coleford: More Church cleaners
- Sedbury: Visitors for the two Homes because of the distance from Coleford
- Lydney: More people to set up the Altar for Mass

People are very good but often the work in the Parish is left to the same few.

With direction could you run the Parish if the Priest was elderly or came in from the outside?

I would like to propose that lay persons who will be assuming Ministries in the Church are blessed in a Mass at the beginning of the Church year: Pastoral Council Members, Altar Servers, Musicians and Readers.

For Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion a blessing and an examination either on the Feast of Corpus Christi or beginning of the year.

This would enable parishioners to know which people would be taking on these roles for the forthcoming year. It would also help ensure that parishioners taking on these roles are aware that they come with responsibilities.

**When we are baptised we accept Christ's call to follow him, by attending to the needs of others and to Christ, strengthened by the Holy Spirit we can all be active members of our Church.**