

# Newsletter resources for you to 'cut & paste'

Introducing the idea of collaboration  
or pastoral development to the parish

It's about a  
new way of  
being  
parish

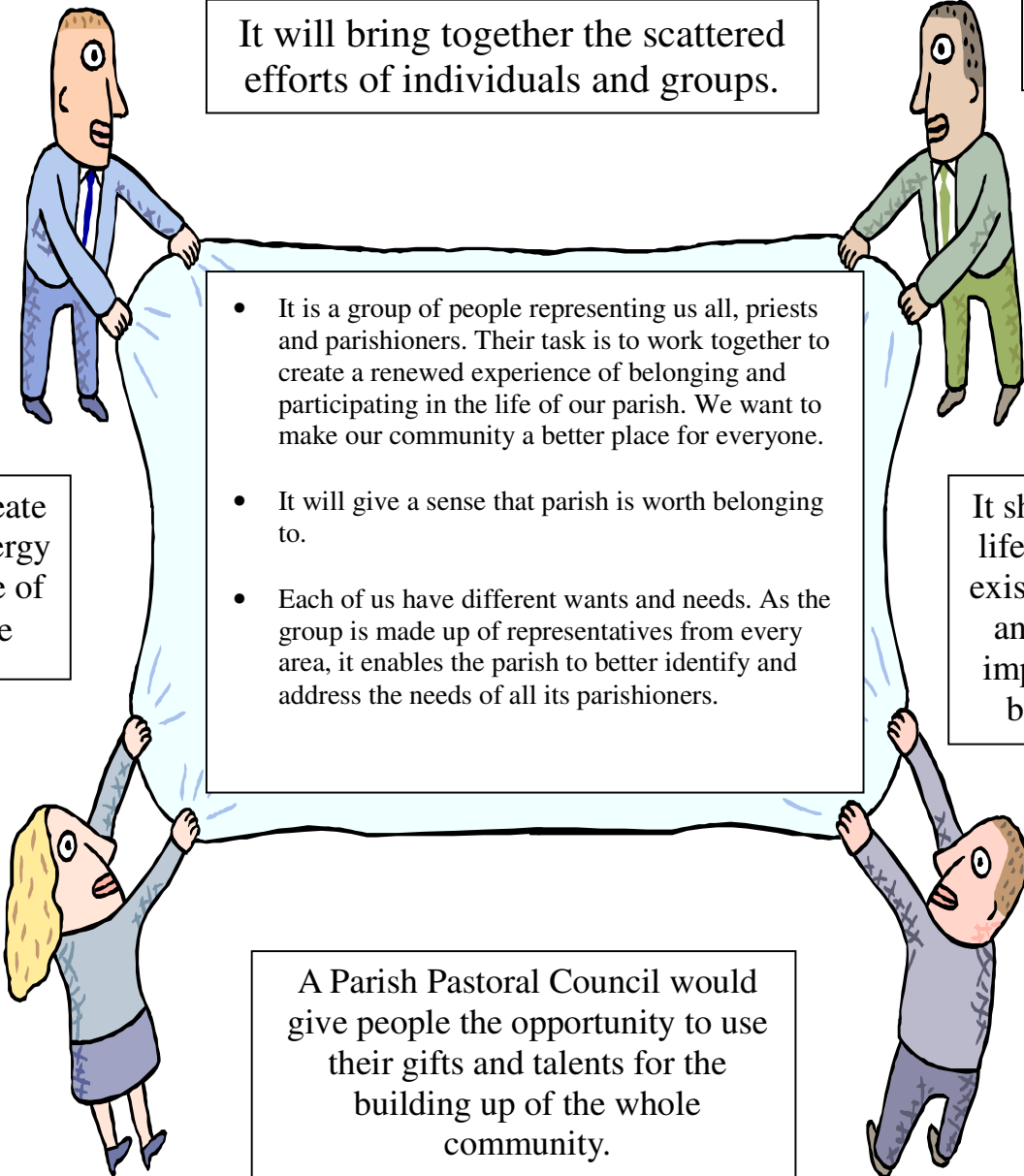
It will bring together the scattered  
efforts of individuals and groups.

- It is a group of people representing us all, priests and parishioners. Their task is to work together to create a renewed experience of belonging and participating in the life of our parish. We want to make our community a better place for everyone.
- It will give a sense that parish is worth belonging to.
- Each of us have different wants and needs. As the group is made up of representatives from every area, it enables the parish to better identify and address the needs of all its parishioners.

It will create  
a new energy  
and sense of  
purpose

It should bring new  
life and purpose to  
existing endeavours  
and enable other  
important work to  
be undertaken.

A Parish Pastoral Council would  
give people the opportunity to use  
their gifts and talents for the  
building up of the whole  
community.





"The Parish is not just a structure, territory or a building. Rather it is a community afire with the Spirit. It ought to be a welcoming place to gather together" (Pope John Paul)

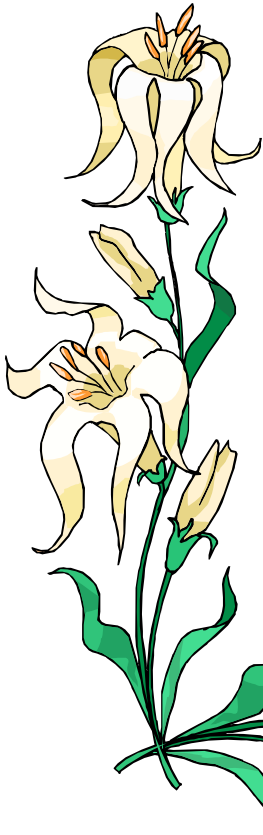
What kind of things would a PPC look at?

Faith matters, generally.  
Community life in our parish.  
The needs of young people, parents, families, bereaved people.  
Supporting marriage.  
The challenge of helping adults learn more about their faith.  
The Sunday Mass - ideas for greater involvement.

***Whatever members feel will make  
our parish community better***

It is *in the local churches* that the specific features of a detailed pastoral plan can be identified — goals and methods, formation and enrichment of the people involved, the search for the necessary resources — which will enable the proclamation of Christ to reach people, mould communities, and have a deep and incisive influence in bringing Gospel values to bear in society and culture.

**Pope John Paul. NMI, 29**



### How does it Happen? – What now?

- 1) We need to pray it and ask the guidance of the Holy Spirit.  
*Oh, Holy Spirit we adore you. Enlighten and guide us as we prepare for our Parish Pastoral Council .*
- 2) Those who are nominated, and who accept their invitation to help build a better parish, will attend a short preparation course. From this parish needs and priorities are identified.
- 3) The pastoral plan agreed upon will be published in the parish newsletter, so that everyone can see what is happening.
- 4) The PPC will make contact with existing groups to see how we can work together, and will help develop new groups where pastoral need is clear. The PPC will have a life-span of three years.

The Holy Spirit does not create communities without placing within it all the gifts the parish needs in order to thrive

### What kind of person would make the best representative?

- A person with knowledge of the needs of the parish and with the interests of the parish at heart.
- A person who would have ideas that would make the Church more relevant to today's world.
- A person who is prepared to listen to the ideas of others and work with others for the common good.
- The nominated person will also need to have time available to attend meetings of the assembly and occasional weekend gatherings.

***Its not what we're doing, its who we're becoming!!!***

**1. Could I be a member of our Parish Pastoral Council?**

Consider it seriously! You have been invited by the people of your area. So it deserves serious thought!

**2. What is this Parish Pastoral Council?** It is a gathering of parishioners whose task is to look at the faith life of the parish, to see where it can be improved, to draw up a programme and to begin to implement it.

**3. Aren't we doing alright as we are?**

Think for a moment. We hear constant complaints: fewer people at Mass; people only interested in making money; drink and drugs rampant among the young; crime on the increase; moral standards never worse; the Church setting a poor example etc., etc. Are we doing alright as we are?

**4. Will the P.P.C. solve all these problems?**

One would be foolish to think that it would. But, what it can do is point the way towards the good values of the Gospel and invite people to follow.

**5. These new-fangled ideas never work!**

A rather sweeping statement. It's based on people taking responsibility for their Parish. It is not a magic formula that will produce instant results.

**6. So. What is it about?**

About God's people trying to find better ways to do his work; about recognising that all the baptised have gifts from God; about people using those gifts to help make this parish more in tune with the Gospel.. It's about the needs of people: parents, children, sick, young, elderly, bereaved etc, etc.

**7. Is this about Church property/buildings?**

No. It is about the faith-life of the parish. Finance, property, maintenance etc. will be dealt with by a separate Committee.

**8. I'm too busy to get involved.** True, many people are very busy with all sorts of commitments. And that is good. People are using their gifts. All the baptised, however, have a common call from God to pass on the faith to others. If we all ignored that call, where would we be? It's a matter of priorities, isn't it? Maybe you could organise your time better to include being in the Assembly?

**9. Its not for me; I've never been on a Church committee before.**

Whether you have been involved before or not, you have a contribution to make. You are a gifted person. Your ideas and your gifts are valuable. You will be welcome. After all, you are baptised. (See no. 6 above)

**10. What kind of time will I be asked to give?**

(a) A training course. This will involve a study of Baptism, Church, Parish, Ministry etc..

(c) A commitment to PPC is made at the end of the course.

(d) The life-span of the Council will be three years. It meets about 8 times a year

**11. I really can't see it making any difference in the Parish.** - Well, it won't if everybody says that! If we don't give it a chance, nothing will happen. It will take time. Mistakes may even be made - the human factor. It needs good will, effort, patience and a whole lot of prayer: God's guidance to help us do God's work.

***'Ministry is based on baptism and giftedness'***

Am I called to serve?  
.... by baptism, yes, you are!!

How am I being called to serve?  
... on the basis of your gifts!!

At the same time, it is necessary to improve pastoral structures in such a way that the co-responsibility of all the members of the People of God in their entirety is gradually promoted, with respect for vocations and for the respective roles of the consecrated and of lay people. This demands a change in mindset, particularly concerning lay people. They must no longer be viewed as "collaborators" of the clergy but truly recognized as "co-responsible", for the Church's being and action ...

*Pope Benedict, May 2009*

*The role of parish leadership (priests and PPC) is not to DO everything.*

*Rather it is called to recognize all the needs of the parish, and to draw out all the gifts in response*

*... so that no ones talents lie undiscovered, and no one moment of need is unnoticed.*