

Summary of Results – Pastoral Planning Questionnaire

Office of Pastoral Planning (Revised: April 12, 2010)

The Diocese of Victoria Pastoral Planning Committee developed a six-page questionnaire that was conducted from November 2009 – December 2009. As data was limited, the purpose of this first phase consultation survey was to explore various aspects of church life through parishioner feedback. The responses from the Diocese, together with the feedback from a second survey in the spring, will assist in the development of a Diocesan Pastoral Plan.

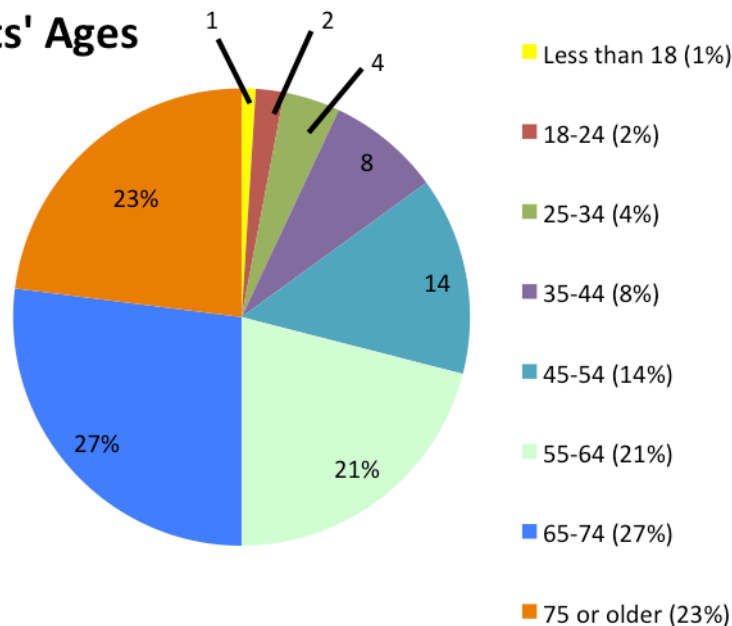
The survey consisted of sixty-seven specific questions with nine more allowing for open-ended responses. Approximately 10,000 surveys were distributed to parishes in the Diocese. Completing the survey online was also provided as an option. The Diocesan Pastoral Planning Committee members would like to thank everyone who kindly participated in the first phase of the Diocesan survey.

Surveys serve as an invaluable tool for researching the attitudes, concerns, needs, loyalty, and priorities held by a particular group of responders. It must be noted, however, that responders will have different levels of awareness and perception relative to their parishes and the Diocese.

Respondent profile:

- A total of 3,162 respondents* from 27 parishes (age 16 and over) participated in the survey. This represents a response rate of 32%. This is a large return sample, and as surveys go, this result is considered to be a tremendous success. Response rates were highest for the 11 parishes located in the Greater Victoria area; these accounted for 80% of all responses. The remaining respondents are from outside the greater Victoria area.
 - *It's worth noting that couples may have submitted one response without identifying they were a couple.*

Respondents' Ages



Other key characteristics of respondents include the following:

- 65% were female; 35% were male
- 71% of respondents were aged 55 or older. The percentage of respondents under 18 years of age is by far the smallest age group (1%); 18-24 year olds (2%); 25-34 year olds (4%); 35-44 (8%); and 45-54 year olds (14%).
- Given the maturity of the survey respondents, it is not surprising that 36% of respondents have been with their parish for 15 or more years.
- 70% of parishioners are married; 13% widowed; 12% single; and 6% divorced.
- Three quarter of respondents have no children under the age of 18 at home.
- Church attendance is significantly high among the parishioners surveyed, with 80% reporting weekly church attendance. Receiving the Eucharist; hearing a good homily, and experiencing a sense of community are key factors contributing to Mass attendance.
- Over 45% of responders indicated volunteering in numerous ministries.
- Over ninety percent of the participants said that they are willing to financially support their parish.
- Nearly 40% of responders chose to offer open-ended comments to the last questions on each section. The responses provided a wide-range of opinions and perspectives. An average of three comments per responder was provided bringing the total to 4,000.

Emerging Trends from the first Survey results:

Based on the 32% survey questionnaire responses, including the 4,000 open-ended comments, the following six areas emerged as trends:

1. **Liturgy and the Sacraments, Spirituality and Prayer:**

The survey results revealed a need to focus on the celebration of the **Eucharist**, to have opportunities for the **Sacrament of Reconciliation** and **devotional practices**. The

importance of ensuring full, conscious and active participation in the Liturgy was stressed, as was the need for Parishes to be open and welcoming.

2. **Religious Education (Catechesis / Faith Formation):**

The survey indicated a desire on the part of parishioners to see development of catechesis not only for **children and youth** but also **young adults** as well as **adults** of all ages. Catechetical programs must, however, according to age level, stress Faith Formation as well. In addition to Catechesis and Faith Formation, there was also a stress on the encouragement of **Vocations** to the Priesthood and Religious Life as well.

3. **Marriage and Family:**

The survey revealed a concern for a number of example areas that could be included under this general heading: **Marriage Preparation, Marriage Enrichment, outreach to the divorced, separated and widowed, outreach to aging parishioners**, as well as a continuing development of the **outreach to those in hospital** and the **homebound**. In addition to these areas of **Marriage and Family Life**, there was also a stress on the need to do more to **protect human life from conception to natural death**.

4. **Youth and Young Adult's Ministry:**

The survey revealed a strong support for both the current programs for Youth in the Diocese and for the need to do more to **develop strong Christian leadership** among our youth.

5. **Parish Outreach and Social Justice:**

There were a number of example concerns regarding the area of Parish Outreach and Social Justice: **outreach to the fallen away, the poor and homeless, as well as those who are marginalized; protection of the sanctity of human life; development of relations between the First Nations and the Church**. It should also be noted that concerns about **ecumenical relations** with the separated brethren, and relations with other faiths, emerged as a concern in a number of comments.

6. **Stewardship and Finance:**

The survey revealed a concern for **Christian leadership** within our parishes and Diocese; an emphasis on **governance** both at the parish and Diocesan level; development of **effective Pastoral Councils and Finance Committees** and; policies and initiatives which will ensure **financial health and stability**. There was also a reference to the need to see **stewardship** as involving one's **time, talent, and treasure**.

The next step - Trend Discernment Discussions:

Various churches within the Diocese are hosting diocesan sponsored meetings, which will provide an opportunity for prayer, discernment and discussions around the six trends listed above. These sessions are being offered during Lent—a time of reflection and hope.

Responses flowing from these sessions will be tabulated and will include review and analysis of any additional recommendations put forward for consideration.

A second shorter survey will then be distributed to capture the discernment discussions and to provide parishioners with another chance to provide their input on draft Diocesan priorities that will assist in the final phase to formulate the Diocese of Victoria Pastoral Plan. Parish-by-parish data will be provided in time to assist with the fall pastoral planning needs.

The Trend Discernment Discussions will be offered on three evenings, which will provide an opportunity to focus on two trends per evening:

- (1) Liturgy & Sacraments, Spirituality & Prayer
Religious Education (Catechesis/Faith Formation)
- (2) Marriage and Family Life
Youth and Young Adults Ministry
- (3) Parish Outreach and Social Justice (Advocacy)
Stewardship and Finance

PARISH	LOCATION	DATE AND TIME
St. Elizabeth's, Sidney	10030 Third Street, Sidney Tel.: 250-656-7433	Mon. March 15 (7 – 9 pm) Thurs. March 25 (7 – 9 pm) Mon. March 29 (7 – 9 pm)
Holy Cross, Gordon Head	4049 Gordon Head Road, Victoria Tel. : 250-477-5321	Mon. March 8 (7 – 9 pm) Mon. March 15 (7 – 9 pm) Mon. March 22 (7 – 9 pm)
O L Queen of Peace, Esquimalt	851 Old Esquimalt Road, Esquimalt Tel.: 250-384-3884	Mon. March 8 (7 – 9 pm) Mon. March 15 (7 – 9 pm) Mon. March 22 (7 – 9 pm)
Sacred Heart, Victoria	4040 Nelthorpe Street, Victoria Tel.: 250-479-1611	Thurs. March 11 (7 – 9 pm) Thurs. March 18 (7 – 9 pm) Thurs. March 25 (7 – 9 pm)
St. Edward's, Duncan	2085 Maple Road, Duncan Tel.: 250-746-6631	Mon. March 8 (7 – 9 pm) Wed. March 10 (7 – 9 pm) Fri. March 12 (7:45 – 9:45 pm)
Ascension Parish, Parksville	887 Wembley Road, Parksville Tel.: 250-248-3747	Tues. March 9 (7:30 – 9:30 pm) Tues. March 23 (7:30 – 9:30 pm) Tues. March 30 (7:30 – 9:30 pm)

St. Peter's, Nanaimo	301 Machleary Street	Tues. March 16 (7 – 9 pm)
	Tel.: 250-753-3570	Mon. March 22 (7 – 9 pm)
		Mon. March 29 (7 – 9 pm)
St. Patrick's, Campbell River	34 Alder Street, Campbell River	Mon. March 22 (7 – 9 pm)
	Tel.: 250-287-3498	Tues. March 23 (7 – 9 pm)
		Wed. March 24 (7 – 9 pm)

For further information, please contact Moira King, Office of Pastoral Planning, Diocese of Victoria by email: mking@redvictoria.org or by phone (250) 479-1331 ext. 248, or (250)217-0659 (cellular), or contact the host church locations listed above.