

Roman Catholic Community of Western Broome Country  
Pastoral Care Area Newsletter 06/05/2022

In February 2022 our local Pastoral Care Area (PCA) teams presented their initial recommendations to our parish communities through a series of three Town Hall meetings. In addition to the presentations, each meeting allotted time for Questions and Answers (Q&As) with Fr. Ken Kirkman. Each meeting was recorded and posted to our parish websites. What follows in this newsletter are some of the questions that Fr. Ken answered in regards to **Remissioning**. Additional Town Hall Q&A newsletters will be published in the coming weeks.

## Remissioning

### **C13) Regarding remission, are all six parishes being remissioned?**

No, all six parishes would not be remissioned. Remissioning is what happens when a church either becomes insolvent and can no longer sustain itself or parishioners. At this point the PCA could recommend to the Bishop that this site may be good for a new ministry and use it for that purpose. The best example we have locally for Remissioning would be St. Casimer's which is now Mercy House and that facility was renovated and converted into a really excellent space as a hospice. It's a fantastic example of what to do with the church that can't sustain a parish anymore but can still serve as a place where people are able to encounter God. It's important that people know as part of this remissioning too that the spiritual needs of any people from that parish will be met by any of the other parishes here in Endicott. You will have the opportunity to go to Mass, have your confessions heard, to see your children and grandchildren get married, to see them be baptized and see the bishop come down to confirm young men and women. But it may not be in the same location in the future and that's simply a hard reality that we need to face and be upfront about. Note that a parish that has been remissioned could potentially still have masses celebrated there, but it all depends on what is decided that we would do with that facility. Another example of a facility that was remissioned elsewhere in the diocese would be St. John the Evangelist in Syracuse which was actually the cathedral for the diocese. It's a church downtown that is now being used at the Samaritan Center. It has a big soup kitchen where they serve meals to people surrounded by stained-glass windows depicting the life of Christ and the saints. It's really a beautiful environment in which their own human dignity is recognized and blessed as they are served a meal by a lot of kind volunteers. That's two examples of how remissioning can go and how a church which isn't able to function as a parish church anymore can still be used for some purposes that further the gospel.

### **B15, C12) Where would the funding for renovations come from if buildings were remissioned?**

This is a good question but it's actually not something we have discussed in any detail yet. The remissioning committee did a great job on the site study and figuring out what ministries and activities are going on, but as to the funding of potentially a remissioned parish that would be discussed in great detail during future PCA planning sessions.

### **A15) Did the re-missioning committee meet with individuals about what is involved with the inter-workings of a specific ministry?**

We are very early in the re-missioning process so as of today no work has been done with the individual ministries other than identifying what they are. However as we move forward it is expected that ministries will play a part in developing recommendations for the future.

**B5) What happens to ministries that are unique to an individual church? Will the uniqueness of the church now be lost?**

As the churches are open their ministries can stay there but as the process of potentially merging it might mean that the unique facet of one parish is linked to another. And that can be a gain for both communities and also an opportunity to add more volunteers to some of these other groups. We know that keeping the uniqueness of our parishes is important but we also have to look at the map and see that consolidating certain things including facilities may mean that ministries that are always in one place may have to be in another location. That isn't always a bad thing, it can provide you with a wider pool of volunteers to pick from.

**B21) All the churches are active and involved in the community, can we use this energy to grow congregations?**

We would heartily agree that all the parishes are active and engaged. You saw the list of ministries that we have. There is a lot going on here. It would be wonderful to tap into that energy.

**B7) Please explain how one Food Pantry would be more effective/efficient?**

The concept is to actually have a single food distribution center that would supply our existing food pantries like St. Anthony's, St. Ambrose etc. The food would simply be delivered to, and obtained from that one place. Perhaps we could get a better price on items in this model.

**B14) Was parking at all sites a consideration for the planning of the re-missioning?**

Yes, it was definitely taken into consideration. Some sites definitely have more parking than others and some have limited parking around the church proper but everything was taken into consideration.

**A16) How will competition with non-profits and government agencies impact us?**

There isn't really any impact. Non-profits and government agencies can offer certain services, and there may be some overlap, but Catholic Charities remains the largest provider of services to the homeless and those in need in Broome County. Preaching the gospel, bringing people the sacraments and bringing people closer to Jesus Christ will continue to remain our mission. We aren't really competing with these groups for hearts and minds, however we are willing to work with these groups when it benefits all.

*May God Bless us as we move into the future*

*Fr. Clarence Rumble, Fr. Ken Kirkman, Fr. John Donovan  
and the PCA Leadership Council of the Roman Catholic  
Community of Western Broome.*