

A PARISH RENEWAL PILOT PROJECT

As part of the parishes pilot project, Fr Robert Carrillo, parish priest of Rivervale, has taken the initiative of forming a Parish Pastoral Team. This initiative comes from the many years of experience in parishes where Father Carrillo has noticed that were many good ideas are brought forth, but many times are not acted upon. The Parish Pastoral Team meets this need.

The Team is made up of a group of parishioners who work in conjunction with Fr Robert, to oversee and act upon the everyday pastoral needs of the parish. The team meets weekly to identify and discuss needs that have arisen in the parish that need to be acted upon.

As Father Carrillo describes that the role Parish Pastoral Team is to “enhance parish life hands-on as a transparent team. The identity of Parish Pastoral Team is a response to a need of the moment and transparent, rather than structured even when the need has ceased to exist.”

Below is the process, rationale and objectives used by Father Carrillo to set up the parish Pastoral Team.

A REFLECTION ON PARISH RENEWAL PILOT PROJECT - ST. AUGUSTINE PARISH RIVERVALE WA

1. Background

The St. Augustine Parish Community was identified as a Pilot Community to enhance revitalising parishes through renewal initiatives. The Project commenced on the 1st Sunday of February 2020.

2. Parish Response Initiative

- 2.1 – Pilot Project information to the Parish Pastoral Council (PPC).
- 2.2 – Formation of the Parish Pastoral Team (PPT).
- 2.3 – Regular weekly meeting of PPT.
- 2.4 – Sunday Mass Liturgy as implementation venue.
- 2.5 – Awareness raising through liturgical symbolisms/actions.
- 2.6 – Sourcing the weekly guide provided by the Archdiocesan Team.

3. The Parish Pastoral Team

3.1 - The formation of the PPT was deemed necessary to implement the parish renewal project. The basic framework of the PPT is **teamwork** in all its aspects: Prayer, Reflection on topic or issue, Planning, Deliberation, Consensus decision, Shared tasking, Implementation, Feed-backing, and Evaluation.

3.2 - Membership of the PPT: Parish Priest and five Parishioners. Each member has been personally approached by the parish priest to attend a caucus meeting to explore the possibility of creating a Team for pastoral initiatives to enhance parish participation, catechesis, liturgical uplifting and community building. When everyone was happy to belong, the team has assumed identity and presented to the parish community.

3.3 - The PPT is not a parish committee or ministry, but to serve as transparent ‘animator’ to parish life. The parish priest is one among the team members in an acting capacity as facilitator, rather than authority leader.

3.4 - Why create PPT when there is a Parish Pastoral Council (PPC)? The PPC is and has been the main body in the parish, the main source of support, advise, guide of the parish priest in the collaborative implementation of the parish evangelisation and physical management of the parish. Generally, PPC's are wonderful groups of parishioners in any parish community working with any/all parish priests. The basic implied orientation of the PPC as a whole body, has been perceived as more 'managerial' or decision-maker, rather than 'hands-on' to pastoral action. One or two members maybe happy to be hands on, and the tendency is to create a 'sub-committee' under the PPC.

The contrast in orientation is that the PPT is focused on one direction, that is, on how to enhance parish life hands-on as a transparent team. The identity of PPT is a response to a need of the moment and transparent, rather than structured even when the need has ceased to exist.

The PPT exists as co-terminus with the parish priest who created it and may be revived in the same way as to the wish of the in-coming parish priest.

Fr. Robert Carrillo PP
21 April 2020

