

SEEKING THE FACE OF CHRIST

SUMMARY OF MEETING AT ST PATRICK'S BROCKWORTH

SATURDAY 16TH JUNE 2007

MAIN QUESTIONS

The following summarises the answers to the two main questions of the programme.

Questions.

What do you think that God is calling us to do in our lives, in our parishes?

What should be included in our pastoral guidelines?

Responses.

Opening up to other communities and religions.

Have our own way of doing things.

Being informed (...about other communities, religions...) and taking an interest.

Be examples so that, through us, people understand Christ.

Try to bring our children up in the Faith so that they continue through their lives.

Non judgemental – regular outreach – social gathering

Provide opportunities for others to ask questions – then follow up with RCIA etc..

Regular Parish prayed meetings.

Education (The lady did in actually say education, education, education, but my political sensibilities did not allow me to put that down as an answer!)

Homilies should concentrate on what we should be doing, how we should be “the Church”. Without being negative about how little we do, be encouraging and strong in stirring up the faith in people to do all the jobs in the Parish.

PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS

Question 1.

What inspires us in the life and message of Jesus to follow him?

Responses.

Everything about Him. Humanity, warmth, understanding. He accepted people for what they are.. Christ is God made personal. He became one of us. This shows how important we are to Him. Christ came to fulfil the covenant with us. He wasn't judgemental. Only goodness came from Him.

Converts challenged by the priest to say why they wanted to be followers of Christ. Vatican II helped one – bringing one's own language to the Mass. Christ brought, through parables, his message to ordinary people. The feeding of the five thousand. Christ did not condemn sinners; eg. Mary Magdalene. Christ made / used fresh ideas, not the old rules. He came for sinners, not the good.

Reveals love of God – compassion – shares our humanity.

Question 2.

How are we good news?

Responses.

Reflect His messages and teachings in the way we communicate with others – it's how we relect His message to others that counts.

By the sign of our living – you can't live a secret life as a Christian.

By passing on our beliefs to others – especially our children.

By good example in our community. Not looking for the plank in people's eyes.

Making an effort to respond to God's love. Actions speak louder than words.

Question 3.

How do we learn from and share with people of different cultures and faiths?

Responses.

We all worship the same God. We should accept others for what they are. We should make it our business to find out what's going on outside our own community – we've all got a duty towards our neighbours.

Muslim, Jew, Christian; they all share the same God. They share the same legacy of Abraham. By sharing knowledge of our different faiths we find the common denominator.

By being open. We need to listen and share. We must be prepared to become involved.

Question 4.

Do we limit our compassion to those we understand?

Responses.

Yes, to some extent – that’s why there’s a problem. Sometimes people are not willing to explore – they stay in their own comfort zone. People who preach on the street are brilliant. Once you get to know people, the faith comes after that.

We should have compassion for all.

By showing our faith by example our compassion can help others – non believers can be touched.

Question 5.

How do we make Christ’s presence tangible?

Responses.

Spread the Word as it is. Showing love – showing we care – being active – doing God’s work – visiting others etc.. We don’t have to make a big fuss about it.

By our concern – empathy – standing up for justice and peace issues.

By doing things for others and them knowing that we believe in Christ and follow His ways.

Question 6.

How do we speak of God to those who hold a secular view of the world?

Responses.

There is a great link between being human and God –belief in God can enhance that. You are already half way there if you follow the commandments openly. Don’t be judgemental when speaking to these people. Give a good example and they may or may not buy in.

By loving one another and doing things for others. By going to church without making it “holy” if it comes up in conversation. Showing it as part of our lives.

Question 7.

How do we understand “evangelisation” and how do we put our vision into practice?

Responses.

Showing your faith – spreading the Gospel – not imposing but inviting people in. Help others, particularly those in need, without asking for a commitment in return.

By talking and by the example of our lives, but not by thrusting our faith before others.

We are the Church, so our lives will tell of our beliefs. By passing on the Good News – that we are here for a reason and because God has created us for love.

FURTHER VIEWS EXPRESSED

There was some discussion as to what we are going to do in the future if we don’t have priests.

Priests should be allowed to marry if they wish. This may encourage more to become priests.

Could parishes pay the training for African priests? Then there might be some reciprocal arrangement.