

## Melbourne Syod Listening and Discernment on Young Discipleship

### Our Lady of the Valley Parish Greensborough VIC. Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> August 10am after Mass

#### Where are we creating opportunities for young people to encounter Christ in Out Parishes and organisations:

1. St Marys Church in Greensborough is starting a Youth Group. Ages are 12-25 which is very broad but after the first meeting likely there will be a younger and older group emerging.
2. Children's Liturgy for pre school and primary aged children in the Sacred Heart Church is growing and effort are being made to extend to the other churches in the parish.
3. Nearby parishes are offering great youth opportunities e.g St Francis Parish Mill Park is offering Alpha Youth and Life teen. There is also Antioch. Maybe link in and offer our youth these opportunities.
4. Schools are fundraising for Vinies which is a great connection and links in with Social Justice.
5. Sunday Mass but they are not there.

#### How could our community create environments that foster the journey in faith of our young people?

**Welcoming** – always being a welcoming place when youth attend church, go up and have a chat. Speak their language. Encourage leadership in our youth. Communicate with them. Make being involved in the church community a positive experience and exciting for them.

**Families** – families are a very important in encouraging youth faith journey. Family is first place where kids learn about God and the Holy Spirit. We need to engage families to come to church more. Parents parents need to step up when it comes to child faith development. It is highly important even in a busy world. It is not enough for children to just know about Jesus but to actually experience the encounter of Jesus and involvement is the best way.

Family Groups are a good way to engage families and children with sense of belonging to the Church.

**Parish School Connection.** This is highly important. We are so privileged to have a church on school grounds. They aren't coming to Mass by and large. The connection has improved a lot thanks to the efforts of the school principal but can go further. Have classrooms attend Sunday Mass regularly maybe on roster basis. School and Church memories can be life long.

**Sport** takes up a lot of time in family lives. Can we bring sport in church and parish life more. Whether with greater involvement in teams or some other way. Sponsor or get involved with teams or get local teams to sponsor and get involved in the church. Youth programs can be run on Sunday afternoon to not clash with outside sport.

**Learn from others.** What are other Churches doing or offering the youth. Non Catholic schools are also doing good things we can learn from. Look wider at what is being offered in the Archdiocese.

#### Vision Looking ahead

Seeing lots of youth about our local church, with good ethics in a world of AI, and making sure hear from youth themselves and not AI. Noticeable close relationship with school families.

Involved in social justice activities like fundraising for Vinnie's or other initiatives in the local community. School and Church aligned in social justice projects, community activities. Feeling a sense of belonging us to them and them to us. Offering to participate in Mass.

It would be good to have Archdiocese provide resources and guidance on appropriate age groups for Youth groups, guidance on structure and activities for these groups, any other encouragement or support for such would be welcome. Archdiocese top down management for both primary and secondary schools to proactively engage with their local churches as part of the curriculum somewhere