

Multicultural, Diverse, and Aging Needs

How can we better integrate immigrants, refugees, and new comers of all ages?

Priority 1:

- By listening to the perspectives of immigrants, refugees and new comers so that we can be able to hear what integration would look like or means to them
- Continue with communications. Ask how they are? Are you still going to school etc?

Priority 2:

- Provide more volunteer opportunities which could facilitate integration

Other ideas:

- Have a cross cultural training
 - Bring in guest speakers
 - Help bridge new and elder immigrants and parishioners
- Sit with new immigrants at coffee
- Create a buddy system to welcome them to allow them to know the parish community of MMOC.
- Create a Parish Photo Directory with reference to different names
- Create mentors to help immigrants adjust to the parish community
- Small Groups/networking for different cultures and ages
- Recognizing the presence of immigrants in the church

Synthesis:

1. By listening to the perspectives of immigrants, refugees, and newcomers, we gain an understanding of what integration means to them. However, we can also ask some essential questions which we feel may facilitate resettlement. This dynamic should be maintained.
2. To facilitate integration, we can create various volunteer opportunities. This will also help individuals bring their talents and develop skills acquired from life or work experiences in Canada or abroad.

What are the needs of our aging population? And how can we better address these needs?

Priority 1:

- Knights of Columbus and Canadian Women's League aging volunteers need younger volunteers.
- Newly Retired → How to show their contribution valuable to the church. Importance on putting focus on the discernment of gifts of the elderly

Priority 2:

- Foster relationship between the youth and the elderly such as creating mentorship opportunities or partner activities.

Other ideas:

- Programming needs for aging population. Create different opportunities that the elderly can attend such as inviting guest speakers, wellness activities and field trips
- Advertise that the parish has a hearing assistance system
- Communicate better with handi-cap seating in church.
- Have portable cushions available at the parish.
- Have physical assistance available during the mass
- Live streaming of the mass
- Adopt-a-grandparent + bring a senior to lunch
- Question: What can we as youth do to address the needs of our aging population?
 - Card games, visitation
 - Help provided service (assist with grocery shopping etc.)

Synthesis:

- 1.) Discerning of gifts for retired and newly retired individuals for personal growth and services to MMOC.
- 2.) Develop relationship between elderly and youth such as mentorship, skill sharing and sharing activities together.

How can we better address parishioners who are homebound and often feel isolated (both spiritually and socially) from the parish community?

Priority 1:

- Live stream Sunday Mass

Priority 2:

- Provide transportation/carpooling
- Get a bus to pick up homebound people
- Home Visits
 - Determine which parishioners want community contact
 - Encourage parishioner visitations

Other ideas:

- Create a list of people prepared to visit homebound parishioners of all ages, elderly, disabled, single parents etc.
- Create a separate email list of homebound people to keep them informed.
- Make phone calls to the homebound.
- Establish guidelines for contact with homebound
- Get together in small groups for social and spiritual activities.
- Visits for the “shut-ins”
- Taping sermons and deliver to the homebound
- Form a What sap chat group that interacts letting potential drivers know whom what when, where to go.
- Meal deliveries to the homebound

Synthesis:

- Identity homebound parishioners by creating an email list and grouping them geographically on this list
- Establish a group of volunteers to visit, transport people to mass, make phone calls and offer the sacrament of communion.

Parishioner Life and Spiritual Challenges

What are the challenges you or your family members are facing in life?

Priority 1

- Time to come together and pray as one. That has been difficult because we all have work to do and it is hard to get up early and pray before leaving.
- Making the time and commitment

Priority 2

- Feeling part of the parish community
- Encouraging family members to participate in parish activities in order to build community
- To dispel the thought that children (small) do not belong in Church
- More involvement opportunities of families and children in mass

Other ideas

- Need for learning how to pray and have a deeper understanding of prayer
- Engaging more families and children in religious education
- Transportation may pose as an obstacle when traveling to and from Church for mass.
- Distance from the church, depression and mood swings
- Building faith with family
- Spiritual stamina as a family
- Finding family time in order to share Faith
- Conflicts of schedules, not enough time spent together
- Other obstacles that make prayer and church life difficult are separation/divorce, addictive behaviour and illness.
- Importance of having support/care groups
- How do we have youth and families put faith + prayer at higher value than other potential social activities.
- Competing activities such as sport and extra-curricular programs
- Feeling dissociated after being away from the community for part of the year

Synthesis

- The challenge family members and us face in life is time to come together and pray as one; making the time commitment and combatting laziness, pettiness and foolishness as a result of missing Mass and days of obligation.
- Families need to feel part of the parish community by participating in parish activities in order to build a sense of community.

What are the challenges in your spiritual development and your relationship with God?

Priority 1

- Making the time for spiritual accountability
- Building the “power of habit”
- Being strong and persevering to create a culture of love and truth

Priority 2

- Lack of support and people to talk to
- The ability to have dialogue on subjects that bother you
- Working towards one heart and one mind

Other ideas

- Importance of using spiritual apps which foster spiritual growth such as a bible app, spiritual podcasts are positive ways of using technology
- Use *Prayer Process* by Matthew Kelly
- How can we make good use of the fact that people are already at mass? Importance of the possibility of having Sunday morning activities before mass.
- Other obstacles that make it difficult to practice the faith are non-practicing or Christian families or friends
- Importance of sending spiritual reflection for each day to focus on.

Synthesis:

- Importance of building spiritual perseverance by making time for spiritual growth through prayer and faith formation
- Importance of creating support for the spiritual journey
 - Having people to talk to/share their faith with
 - Creating a space of dialogue for others on difficult topics
 - Having spiritual accountability partners

As a parish community, how can we better serve your needs either as youth, young adults, singles, couples, families, seniors or as the elderly?

Priority 1:

- How to support busy moms and dads by encouraging making time for Christ
- Networking and socialize with small groups based on different age groups.
- “Youth Drop In” centre
- Collaborating with other Christian churches for connectedness + sharing resources

Priority 2:

- Would like to meet with parents of older children/young adults about how to deal with their “lack of enthusiasm” about religion.
- Recognizing that God needs to be the centre of all parts of our life
- Help know how to pray for/influence other members with their relationship with God.

Other ideas:

- Raising Christian kids in a secular world, busyness
- Marriage prep for the secular world

Synthesis:

- Importance of small groups to support people/segments through life challenges
- Importance of encouraging faith in families in a secular society.

Small Group Faith Formation Program

What are your suggestions in creating small groups?

Priority 1

- Faith struggles for teenagers
- Encourage studies from Beth Moore (studies on women)
- Faith programs for men/programs for families
- Other studies with books + videos/combination of videos + discussions
- Discussion with topics relating to liturgical events with booklets/literature as resource
- Revisit some past topics such as *Journey Through the Mass* and Bible Study
- Study of *Resisting Happiness* by Matthew Kelly and *Gospel of John* by Allen Hunt
- Ask parishioners ideas of topics that they would like to discuss for small groups

Priority 2

- Need for dynamic leaders of small groups who are knowledgeable of the topics
- Have small group with a maximum of 6-8 people.
- Have some groups meet on Saturday/Sunday, not just on the evening
- Small groups that meet for 1hr, in a small room

Synthesis

- Have a variety of books/literature and resources that emphasize the meaning of liturgical events. These resources should or studies should touch on specific populations such as children, teens, men and women.
- Groups should only be 6-8 people in a smaller space with knowledgeable and dynamic leaders to lead these small groups. Small groups would ideally take place not only during the weekdays, but also during the weekends too.

Volunteer Program

What can MMOC do to help parishioners reorganize and appreciate it as a blessing to serve at Mary, Mother of the Church?

Priority 1

- Job description for all ministers
- Ministry leaders to meet other parishioners and to know them
- Share talents and interests to help parishioners learn where they can serve.

Priority 2:

- Foster a sense of belonging
- Create an atmosphere where people can get to know other parishioners

Other ideas:

- Promote the “tithing of time and talents” as well as treasure
- Have ministry leaders introduce themselves before and after mass and share a little bit about their ministry

Synthesis:

- Help parishioners to feel comfortable to come forward to volunteer by providing guidelines and descriptions of duties and expectations through presentations and pamphlets
- Be friendly and welcoming by embracing newcomers, by accepting suggestions and consider new things and by introducing ministry leaders

What can MMOC do to increase the volunteer engagement, including numbers of volunteers and commitment?

Priority 1

- Increase amount of volunteer outreach opportunities to more than 1 volunteer per year
- Have the skills and interests advertised for volunteer positions to “match” people to positions

Priority 2:

- Create volunteer opportunities that include the whole household.

Synthesis:

- Design an advertising/marketing strategy that will allow future volunteers to match themselves with appropriate volunteer activities. This design would include incorporating a description of the skills involved, their interests and their availability of the volunteer.
- Create volunteer activities that can involve the whole household unit.

What is the most important thing your Ministry or MMOC could do differently to help volunteer contribution more effective, enjoyable, meaningful and satisfying?

Priority 1

- Have information about ministries available to encourage new members to join

Priority 2

- Have a “Ministry of the month”. Highlight one ministry/month and their parish work.

Other ideas:

- Have more appreciation events for volunteers
- Have a re-usable sandwich board to easily change/announce ministry leaders
- Have an informal fellowship gathering for the ministry so that they feel part of that ministry
- Celebration of the different ministries at the park
- Have a bulletin that is used to list name + phone number of ministry leaders.

Synthesis:

- Have adequate information for new parishioners to encourage involvement and have information of ministry lead available for contact.
- Education and visibility of ministries → provide training for different ministries and showcase a “ministry of the month” at mass.

“Parking Lot” comments

- Provide services such as practice sessions and tours around the city (especially to newcomers)
- Have “Sign-up Sundays” for volunteers
- Teach caring for the elderly
- We are not as verbal when it comes to talking about our Faith
- Parish to consider a computer program for ministry schedules (St. Bernadette Parish uses a similar program)
- Be friendly, smile and encourage others at Sunday mass.
- Continue the great work!
- Connectedness is one of the highest human needs. We should be careful not to have connectedness slaughtered on the altar of privacy. They can both be achieved!
- Privacy concerns with parish directory (photos/personal information, access)
- Privacy concerns with streaming/video broadcasting of mass service
- Connect with other immigrant serving organizations to have an understanding of the needs of refugees