

PARISH CONVERSATION - ST. ANNE'S CHURCH

"What's A Rector For, Anyway?"

Summary of Sunday 10 April 2016 – 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

This Parish Conversation was the next step in the follow-up to the Sharing Faith day that took place on Sunday 21 February and the Parish Celebration on Saturday 05 March 2016. The Rev. Rita Harrison was the facilitator for this Conversation.

After the opening prayer the purpose of the current session was outlined. The purpose was to start a conversation about clergy leadership. "We have differing expectations and different congregations have different needs. The data will not be collated because this is the beginning of a conversation not a survey to make decisions. Our congregation needs a clearer sense of our mission before we can make intelligent decisions about clergy leadership."

Guidelines for a positive, constructive experience included the reminder of using only Holy Manners when contributing personal opinions and concerns. An opportunity was given to finish the *Rector's Role – A Conversation Starter* questionnaire and then to score responses with the values of #4 & #5 onto the new handout *Types of Rector and Their Typical Priorities*.

The five types of rector include the following:

1. The Priest
2. The Pastor
3. The Teacher
4. The Administrator
5. The Exhorter

Participants were then divided into small groups according to their ranking of importance of the statements in the above questionnaire. Since The Priest (#1) was a top-priority for everyone there were four remaining small groups (#2-#5).

Each small group was to answer the following and be prepared to present their findings to all participants:

1. Why do you believe this is what a rector ought to be?
2. Can you give an example of a rector/clergy of St. Anne's who was/is this type?
3. What strengths would the laity of the parish have to provide in order for the parish to thrive with this sort of rector?

Small group summaries of types of rectors:

The Pastor:

- know the importance of visiting and connect personally with all parishioners at each year
- understand traditional expectations that the pastor shows leadership spiritually, emotionally and financially
- building community of the parish, makes parish life relevant to today and society
- is a problem solver and a good listener
- needs to be caring and compassionate and puts it all into action
- examples of rectors include: Rev. Walter Mills, Rev. Reg Joselyn, Rev. Janet Lynall
- strength and support of laity include a strong parish council, lay leaders for education of children and adults, identify and equip laity for needed ministries, pray for the rector, employ a competent office administrator

The Teacher:

- can be a facilitator
- to engage the congregation in the liturgy
- to inspire people to get involved in leadership roles
- examples of rectors include: Rev. Walter Mills who engaged others in participating leadership, Rev. Janet Lynall for her interest in Bible study
- laity strengths include being a leader in areas where there is need for pastoral care, visitation and financial responsibility

The Administrator

- aware of the value of church life and consider having a church life co-ordinator laity position
- know and protect their own spiritual, emotional and mental health
- has a knowledge of resources and finances, exhibits people skills and co-ordinates laity strengths respectfully
- example of rector: Rev. Rita Harrison
- laity: needs to have strong support already in place, accept strengths and weaknesses in both priest and laity, practice patience, co-share responsibilities to avoid burnout, have faith and believe that the parish can survive with a variety of supports with an administrator rector

The Exhorter

- crucial to ignite the passion as Christians
- to bridge the gap between St. Anne's and the whole church community
- examples of clergy: Rev. Ken Brooks, Rev. Rita Harrison
- laity: needs to have good administration strengths, involve congregation to encourage faith, encourage and support an open congregation to have positive relationships with the rector
- "We need it all!"

It is important to know the reality that no one rector can be "everything to everyone". As we move forward and look at St. Anne's mission and future, it will be really important to keep in mind about the kind of rector who will help us move more fully into God's call. This will mean thinking carefully about the gifts the rector will need, but also about the ministries that the laity will need to carry. How will those mesh?

Then followed the presentation and discussion of John Bowen's recent article: *The Four Kinds of Leader We Need*. This author from Wycliffe College suggests that there are four kinds of leader we need today:

1. The traditional pastor - in today's world this pastor is not enough and may lack specific skill-sets
2. The palliative care leader - this is not a "hospice role" but the pastor helps with a dying parish
3. The turnaround leader - an extremely difficult position for the pastor because the congregation has to be willing to work and not be fearful of change
4. The pioneer leader - the pastor starts a brand new Christian community

In discussion this Parish Conversation focussed on Bowen's first type of traditional pastor. Depending on the type of future into which God is calling St. Anne's, we may need a completely different type!

The next steps are to gather and examine the demographics both within the parish and in the Byron community.

Jesus said to disciples who did not catch any fish,
"Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some." John 21:6

Is it time for St. Anne's to cast their net to the other side of the boat?