

moving forward

Executive Summary – St. John the Evangelist Parish Survey – October, 2011

The St. John's parish survey was completed in the week of October 16-23, 2011, by 162 people in regular contact with the parish. Since 77% of respondents are at church at least every two weeks, nearly 90% of the respondents have been in the parish more than 3 years, and 79% of respondents have volunteered in the parish in the last two years, the survey responses probably reflect the views of the committed members of the parish.

Respondents identified the following elements of parish life as being highly important in keeping them connected to the parish: inclusiveness and openness; welcoming feeling; music and choir; social outreach and clergy. The importance of these five elements of the parish for members was often repeated in other parts of the survey.

Sermons, liturgy, pastoral care and education were identified by fewer respondents as connecting elements. They were, however, identified as important attributes for our future priest.

A dominant message by respondents in answering open-ended questions was their desire to be better connected to others in the parish, mostly through small groupings. Repeatedly, in different ways, respondents asked for unifying, visionary leadership in the parish under the new priest, although nearly all recognized the enormous array of already existing programs in the parish under lay leadership.

In other responses to open-ended questions (cf. especially appendix E of the survey report and elsewhere), respondents raised issues and concerns that will be considered as part of the moving forward process in the parish and beyond.

Respondents wrote over 3,900 words describing our new priest. Based on the verbatim responses and frequency analysis (cf. appendix D of this report), criteria suggested for a priest are as follows:

- an excellent manager and decisive leader, with team building skills;
- an inspiring preacher, liturgy leader and communicator;
- a Spirit-led listener with a strong faith and with good pastoral skills;
- compassionate; relatively young; open; energetic, with a good sense of humour;
- committed to an inclusive, diverse community, engaged in social outreach and social justice.

Description of Respondents

People from every age grouping answered the survey; although most of the respondents were over 45 (38% were between 45 and 64, and 37% between 65 and 80). The respondents were predominantly female (62%). 15% self-identified as gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered. 13% reported having physical challenges. The respondents described themselves as highly educated with 88% of respondents having a university or college degree or professional certification. Respondents' reported incomes varied from over \$80,000 (36%) to under \$10,000 (8%). Nearly a third of the respondents had incomes between \$50,000 and \$80,000.

Please note: The entire survey report, including analyses as well as appendices with verbatim responses is available on the St. John's parish website: - <http://www.stjohnsottawa.ca/index.php/resources>