

Parish Review Meeting

Sunday 4th August 2019.

Approximately 130 parishioners attended the meeting, held after 10.30 Mass.

The purpose of the meeting was to report to the community and seek feedback on:

- 1) How many churches are needed to cater for Mass count?
(taking into account the availability of priests).
- 2) Where is the ideal location for the church or churches and best location for presbytery?
- 3) What steps to take in relation to above?

The format was a power point (slide) presentation commencing with a timeline of activities the committee has followed since the pastoral letter was read in February.

Up to this date, information collected included:

Demographic trends

Mass Counts

Church capacities

School rolls

Earthquake strengthening issues

10 year budget plan

Consultation with Richmond parish

Development and evaluation of proposals

Of significance, demographically, Stoke and Richmond are the future growth area in the region.

Mass counts and school rolls are relatively stable.

Both churches, are above the minimum earthquake standard with respective capacities of 350 & 300 -- the combined Mass count being 757.

Budget projections, including a 10 year maintenance plan indicated the status quo was financially sustainable.

Several meetings have been held with Richmond parish to discuss future possibilities. They were to have their community consultation meeting on this day also and we will continue to meet to discuss common grounds.

The following options were identified for evaluation:

- 1) Status Quo**
- 2) Close St Francis & retain St Mary's**
- 3) Close St Mary's & retain St Francis**
- 4) Close both & build new church**
- 5) Amalgamate with Richmond & build a Catholic Hub on a new site.**

The pros and cons of each were worked through with a **clear majority favouring option 1 and option 5 a close second.**

Consensus was that a further round of amalgamation is likely, leading to possibly just one priest for the region and at such time the current number of Masses would not be sustainable.

Where to from here?

- 1) Further consultation and question time following Masses 17th 18th August.
- 2) Suggestion box for comments available in church foyers until 1st Sept.
- 3) Copies of slide presentation available on parish website and church foyers.
<https://www.holyfamilynelson.com/>
- 4) Draft copy of final document written during September

