##### *Where do we go from here……………?*

1. If you are a parish priest what do you need to do to help your parish community to communicate more effectively, thereby enabling you to have more time for your specific priestly duties?
2. If you are in a parish with a resident priest, how would you like to see your parish priest enabling your community to communicate more effectively with and without his presence in the future?
3. If your parish is without a resident priest what action do you need to take now, following your reflection?

**Realistic action:**

*(When you have made your plans make sure everyone knows what they are, when they will happen and why they are important.)*

##### *Insert name of your Parish here*

##### *Communicating with new Parishioners and Visitors*

##### *………………………… Catholic Church, is part of the Deanery of………., Doncaster in the Diocese of ………….*

**Communicating with New Parishioners and Visitors:**

Imagine you are a new parishioner attending your parish for the very first time or indeed a visitor, new to the area. What are your impressions of your very first visit?

Is the church easy to find?

Is there a welcome notice?

Are you welcomed by a parishioner? *(The ministry of welcome cannot be overstated and makes such a difference. We only get one chance!)*

Is it clear where toilets are situated, where mass sheets, hymn books, bulletins are to be collected from?

Does the bulletin regularly welcome new people? Do the bidding prayers acknowledge new faces?

Do people acknowledge your presence, smile at you, say hello, or ask you if you are new to the community?

Is there a “Welcome to our Parish Leaflet”?

……………………….

Should you wish to review or re-create such a leaflet, the following suggestions may help …

It should contain:-

 the mission statement

a warm message of welcome

the details of church services and where the church(s) are

key contact names and addresses and phone numbers

 school information

 information from the wider community

It should be:-

 attractive

 colourful

 welcoming

 easy to read

 and offer clear information

You may like to look at some of the examples in the appendix to this resource but remember this is simply a welcome ……………

##### DO NOT PUT IN TOO MUCH DETAILED INFORMATION

***A KEY QUOTE TO CONSIDER***

“Whatever else the Church is about, communication is at its centre, so much so that it is possible to describe the Church, as Cardinal Martini did, as “communication”. That has to be part of the sign we give if we are to be faithful to the mandate and mission

given us by Christ.”

(Bishop Crispin Hollis, March 1996)