***KEY QUOTES***

Look at the key quotes

Whether in diocese or parish, various members of the Church can help in each other’s formation. Priests and religious should be included in this. The Synod also wants priests and ordinands to be trained to help with lay formation. Similarly, the laity themselves can and should help priests and religious on their spiritual journey.

Christifideles Laici 61

There can be no priority more urgent, no effort more worthwhile, than the slow, patient work of forming lay people for their unique and irreplaceable task … Formation has therefore to be flexible and adapted to the diverse needs of clergy and laity of all ages, since formation is of course life-long and never considered to be complete.

The Easter People 147

Lay people have the duty and the right to acquire the knowledge of

Christian teaching which is appropriate to each one’s capacity and

condition, so that they may be able to live according to this

teaching, to proclaim it and if necessary to defend it, and may be

capable of playing their part in the exercise of the apostolate.

Code of Canon Law 229

***FOR REFLECTION***

If you are a parish priest what do you need to do to enable the people of the parish to continue their on-going formation, bearing in mind that time will limit your specific teaching role as a priest.

If you are in a parish with a resident priest how would you like to see your parish priest enabling your community to offer appropriate formation to all its members with and without his presence in the future?

If your parish is without a resident priest what action do you need to take now with regards to on-going formation in the parish?

##### *(Please insert your own parish name here before copying for parish use)*

##### *Parishes of Hope*

*Celebrating, consolidating and securing the Mission of the Church in Doncaster Deanery; - an opportunity to deepen the faith of our Parish communities in changing times*

***“Gratitude for the past, enthusiasm for the present, hope for the future” (John Paul ll)***

##### *Exploring Sacraments*

##### *Diocese of Hallam*

##### *Doncaster Deanery (St Charles Borromeo)*

***Dean: Rev Augustine O’Reilly V.F.***

*Our Lady of Sorrows & St Francis, Armthorpe; Blessed English Martyrs, Askern; Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Bentley; St Alban’s, Denaby Main; Our Lady of Mount Carmel Intake; Sacred Heart, Balby; St Paul’s, Cantley; St Peter in Chains, Doncaster: St Mary’s, Edlington; English Martyrs, Mexborough; St Joseph & St Nicholas, Moorends; Christ the King, Rossington; Our Lady of the Assumption, Stainforth; St Joseph & St Teresa, Woodlands.*

**EXPLORING PREPARATION FOR THE SACRAMENTS FOR CHILDREN**

One of our deanery parishes suddenly found themselves with no resident parish priest and no school within the parish. The responsibility of preparing children for the sacraments of First Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation therefore fell entirely on the lay people of the parish.

The parish had two catechists who had lots of experience and appropriate formation.

They worked on the following principles:-

1. Preparation of children also meant formation of adults - parents were invited to be fully involved in the preparation of their children and provision was made for this.
2. All meetings were carefully planned in advance.
3. All meetings were timed to enable as many as possible to take part.
4. Active participation by other parishioners was encouraged and opportunities for this structured into the programme.
5. The programme was reflected in the liturgical life of the parish.
6. All liturgical celebrations where children were involved were fully discussed with the visiting priest.
7. The Dean was made fully aware of the parish programme.

In practice it operated this way ……………………..

1. A notice was sent inviting the parents to contact the “key catechist”.
2. A letter was sent to the nearest Catholic school which a few of the parish children attended, inviting named parents there to contact key catechist. Discussions were held with the head.
3. Parents were invited to a meeting and given an outline of what would be happening at that meeting.
4. A first meeting was held, (to which the Dean was invited and was able to attend). Suitable times and dates were discussed and a “contract” drawn up outlining responsibilities of parents and responsibilities of catechists.
5. The programme had four sessions for First Reconciliation and four for First Eucharist - sessions for parents ran concurrently. It was agreed that the best time for all concerned was to be the time before weekly celebration of Eucharist at 6pm on a Saturday.
6. Parishioners were invited to be prayer sponsors and openly “adopt” any new families.

1. Throughout the programme the liturgical celebrations were followed by very short but important social get together.
2. The conclusion of the programme was a parish picnic.
3. Arrangements were made for follow-up work with the children. This took the form of a children’s “club” which had a definite catechetical element and met once a month on a Saturday morning.

*The same principles applied for preparation for Confirmation but the young people were more involved in the decision making and also attended a weekend Retreat experience.*