Good evening

I would just like to take a little of your time to tell you about something that is happening in August – in our parish and across the whole Archdiocese of Cape Town. You may remember a little over a year ago we ran a Parish Culture Survey in the parish asking every parishioner to complete a survey of questions to find our how you experience the church in our parish.

Well in the month of August we are going to do pretty much the same survey again. This time we will have last year’s data so we will be able to compare our results to see how we are faring.

Let me give a little background first. In Matthew 28:19-20 Jesus gave the apostles – and us – what is known as the GREAT COMMISSION when he said ‘Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.”

This is the purpose of the Church. This is our missionary mandate. And the survey is a way of us finding out how effective our parish is in living out this missionary mandate.

The SA Catholic Bishops Conference Pastoral Plan and the Archdiocese of Cape Town’s PPC Statutes have given us the 7 portfolios of parish pastoral life and it is through them that we live out this missionary mandate.

In **Community Engagement and Outreach** we minister to the needy outside our parish – the poor, the marginalised, the dispossessed. In the **Liturgy** portfolio we come together as a Catholic worshipping community. In **Parish Community Building** we form our community – we support people in our community with caring, social events, and with prayer - in small groups and as a larger community. Life has its struggles which is why we try to be there for each other. In **Faith Formation** we learn about the treasure that is our Catholic faith and we become better disciples through the love that grows out of the wonder of learning and discovery. We nurture our **Youth** because they represent today and without them there is no future. And we place **Family and Marriage** at the centre of our social structure. It is the domestic church – a microcosm of the church. As disciples we **evangelise** our faith – in what we say and in what we do and how we reach out from an invitational and welcoming church to people outside the church.

These are the 7 portfolios of parish life … and the more we do all this, the more we are indeed living our missionary mandate.

It matters that we live our missionary mandate. And that’s why this survey is so important - because it gets to the heart of how we are doing.

The mechanics of the survey are quite simple:

The survey is being conducted across the whole Archdiocese of Cape Town – in every one of the 74 parishes.

So I am here to ask you – to ask everyone – all ages and especially the youth too – for a few minutes of your time in the coming weeks to complete this survey.

There is a link so you can just click on it and do the survey online. I promise you it is really really easy. If ‘online’ is not for you, we will have hardcopies that you can complete and return to the church.

The survey ends at the end of August but let’s try and do it sooner rather than later.

Once the survey is closed on 31 August the results will be processed and in October we will receive our parish report. The survey is not worth anything unless it results in action – and we will do just that. We will make sure that the results are shared with you and the PPC will analyse and use the report for planning purposes.

I want you to know that we are listening. We encourage you to answer the survey thoughtfully, honestly, openly and with sincerity. There are some questions where you are asked to rate activities on a scale of 1 to 10. And there are a few places where you can provide your comments. Please do leave your comments because they give insights into the data.

This survey causes us to think and be reflective about the kind of parish we are, what we have become and who we would like to be. I say ‘we’ because parish life is participative – we cannot be onlookers. We all make up the fabric of the parish participating in our own ways and as we are called by God.

Thank you for your time and God bless you.

If you have any questions please contact Fr <NAME>, or me or any member of the PPC, or the parish office.