

**DIALOGUING QUESTIONNAIRES ABOUT OUR SENSE OF
PERCEIVED SPIRITUAL AND PASTORAL NEEDS IN BLESSED
SACRAMENT PARISH, INDEPENDENCE LAYOUT, ENUGU**

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PREAMBLE:

When the bishop, Most Rev. C.V.C. Onaga, gave me the letter of appointment as the parish priest of Blessed Sacrament Parish, Independence Layout, Enugu, I noted a particular instruction, if you like a particular counsel, to “always keep in mind that as a pastor of souls, you have been sent to the people of God not to lord it over them but to care for their needs and learn from their words and experiences”. This counsel tallies with the Second Vatican Council’s vision as well that “the joys and hopes, the grief and anguish of the people of our time, especially those who are poor or afflicted, are the joys and hopes, the grief and anguish of followers of Christ as well”. It becomes fitting and appropriate that the council’s vision and our bishop’s counsel are to be explored to see what possibilities lie therein for the enhancement of the faith of the people, bringing them higher in faith, hope and charity from where they are met at this point when we are taking over the care of their souls.

WITNESSING:

“You are witnesses of these things” (Mt 28:16-20, Lk 24:48).

As a parish, we are called to be witnesses of the reality of the life, death and resurrection of Christ, everywhere confessing Christ crucified.

How has Blessed Sacrament Parish been such a witness for Christ, even where we have to suffer for our loyalty?

How could we be better witnesses? Any perceived need/challenge? Specific areas could be mentioned. Witnessing, however, could be expressed in different forms but let us begin with the sacraments.

SACRAMENTS:

As a parish, the administration of the Sacraments of the Church is the means through which the resources of God's love flow into our souls. How has our parish been effective administrator and recipient of the sacraments and how could we improve? Any perceived need? Describe your response.

a. Baptism

Infant baptism: How many times is it held in our parish and do you know the amount paid in stole fees? Did you see any perceived need in the administration of infant baptism, any challenge? What are your suggestions on how this need could be addressed, how these challenges could be overcome?

- **RCIA** - Rite of Christian Initiation of Adult: Has this been recognized in our parish? Has our parish been very faithful in increasing her adult members through this means? Our parish could engage in an outreach (spiritual exercise) in order to reach out to as many non-baptized adult persons as possible, who would be engaged in the RCIA program. Has this been done and if yes, how could this outreach be improved on? What is your perceived need of our parish regarding the whole RCIA program and how could this need be addressed?
- Have there been sponsored candidates to Bishop Eneja School of Evangelization or to any of the other schools like SPIEE? If sponsored how, in your perceived sense of our need to

rigorously engage in outreach, would the graduates be helpful in addressing the perceived need?

- Do we know the number of baptized and non-baptized members of our parish? If no, could we have a parish census? Do we have a parish census committee and has the committee been very effective in adding and/or subtracting from those we considered to be veritable members of our parish, living within the boundaries of our parish or not? Do you perceive any need here? Describe your response.

b. Confirmation

When was the last time the sacrament of confirmation was conducted in our parish? This is connected to knowing when the Bishop made the last pastoral visit to our parish. When was it?

Have the confirmed persons increased in our parish? What is your perceived need in this area and how could it be tackled? If the Bishop has not had a pastoral visit to our parish in 5 to 10 years, do you see any need for this within the shortest possible period and within which duration? Describe your response

c. Holy Eucharist: (describe your response) what is your perceived need here? Which items used during Eucharistic celebrations are to be upgraded and/or replaced?

- The priests' vestments, altar knights' vestments, lay readers' vestments, ministries of hospitality's vestments, procurement of uniform for altar girls?
- For the choir to be upgraded? For this, a music director/teacher is to be engaged for one year to drill the choir or what? The Mass at the hall, should have an organist? How?

- General training of different ministries to be conducted, like trained personnel to be contacted to help deepen the knowledge and thereby raise standard of performance during liturgical celebrations? Describe your response. How would that be done?
- Times for Sundays masses 6am, 9am, 8am, and 9:30am? Are these okay or do you perceive any further need? What and how do you feel it could be addressed?
- First Holy Communion/first Sacrament of Reconciliation to be organized like how many times in a year? What is your perceived need here? Tell the story
- Lapsed Christians (Absentees from Holy Communion): Are there persons in this category? Have their individual cases been considered, case by case, and is there further assistance that can be rendered for further help? How in your own sense?

Word of God within the Eucharistic Celebration

- How has the word of God come forth from the preachers sent to us so far? Describe your experience with one or two preachers in our parish you know. Getting back to the days of who and who and how?
- Has the scriptures' God-given meaning to the hearers been the case and applied to their hearts? Have the preachers kept the Bible's one story in mind? Describe the experience. What is your perceived need here and how would it be met, in your sense?
- Has Jesus Christ been preached, the work and person of Jesus Christ, ending by calling listeners to respond to the implications of the life-changing message of Christ? Has the

life of the people been challenged unto change, even when uncomfortable, by the preachers? What is your perceived need?

- Faith in Christ and repentance: Have these resonated from your former preachers and what is the expected perceived need here? Repentance from what? Be specific on the perceived area in the parish through which the Word of God needs to penetrate or reach.
- Preaching in the power of the Holy Spirits: The priest-preachers received power when the Holy Spirit came upon them at priestly ordination to preach the gospels, has Spirit power impacted the preaching of those sent to you and caused their words to cut listeners to the hearts (acts 2:37)? What is your perceived need here for life-changing, spirit-power homilies to be delivered? How, in your sense, could this be achieved?
- Preaching with boldness: This is tied to spirit-power preaching. The apostles speak of the amazing things they had seen and heard after witnessing the resurrected Jesus and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 4:20), has this boldness, by declaring to people their guilt and by testifying to Christ boldly in front of all, been the case with our present preachers? What is your perceived need here? How, in your sense of faith, would this be addressed? Describe your response.
- **Lay Readers:** Has there been the proclamation of the Word of God by the lay readers? What is the perceived need here and how would that be addressed. Describe your response and suggestions.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

- Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in the Perpetual Adoration Chapel has helped tremendously. Any perceived need even for greater, more upgraded, help with regard to this area? What is your sense and how do you suggest areas of upgrading?
- More parish involvement in adoration/visit to the Blessed Sacrament? Is this possible? How? Let us hear the testimony of a parishioner with regard to the Blessed Sacrament Parish

“The BSP is a Parish so unique in many respects. Unlike other Parishes in Enugu Diocese, the BSP traces its origin from, and is in fact, located beside the Bishop's Court. Although it had a humble beginning like many other Parishes, the BSP witnessed an explosion in its early growth. Three main factors, amongst many others, accounted for this quick surge. First is the *location* of the Parish, second is the *name* of the Parish, the third and most importantly was the *quality of Pastors* posted to the Parish ... The name BLESSED SACRAMENT PARISH is undoubtedly unique and resonated amongst many Catholics and even non-Catholics within and beyond Enugu. People who lived outside the geographical boundaries of the Parish were surreptitiously attracted to the Parish as a result of its unique name ... The Parish, in its early stages, was blessed with “Charismatic” priests who provided a blend of Pentecostalism with the traditional Catholic mode of worship. This resonated with most of the worshippers and even attracted many others, thus leading to an astounding increase in the membership strength of the Parish.

This inspirational mode of worship coupled with a special band group (made up of some non-Catholics) ignited tremendous growth and attracted a large number of worshippers to the Parish. As a result, infrastructural development of the Parish was quickened and the reputation of the Parish grew astronomically ... It was during this period that the New Church and the Parish presbytery were constructed. Attendance at Sunday masses in those days was massive such that Canopies/Tents were provided outside the Church along with TV sets, to accommodate the usual overflow of worshippers ... This trend lasted until the sudden change/transfer of the pastoral team. What followed was a massive exodus of "non-resident" worshippers who either returned to their original Parishes or immediately sought for alternative places of worship convenient to them".

Wow, something great seemed to have happened during those early stages, from the name **Blessed Sacrament Parish** to the **"Charismatic Priests"** sent, but with experiences of "sudden change/transfer of pastoral team", considered turning points in downward slide, to almost collapse of the surge.

While everyone is expecting some form of "the miracle" of the "Charismatic" to repeat itself, and we agree with this expectation, it is also true that people are looking for this "miracle" still from the same instruments that are capable of experiencing "sudden change/transfer of pastoral team". To this fixation we have a question: what of anchoring this "miracle" on the reality that never experiences and is incapable of experiencing "sudden change/transfer"? What of placing this miracle on **Jesus the**

Blessed Sacrament HIMSELF? How? What of **Blessed Sacrament First Week** of intense monthly parish adoration? This is to be held for seven days spanning through last Sunday of each month to the first Sunday of the following month, not now in the Chapel of Perpetual Adoration, but in the Main Church. It can only be stopped with the intervention of the celebration of the Eucharist in the morning and evening and the night time? We are Blessed Sacrament Parish and therefore would such intense celebration of Adoration to the Blessed Sacrament, as a parish event, be considered worthwhile? What about leveraging on so many Eucharistic miracles of the Blessed Sacrament adored so intensely? Do you perceive that there shall be showers of blessings again but not on the one capable of being changed but on the ONE remaining permanent? We have already test-run this at the Altar of Repose on Holy Thursday night watch with great result and confirmation. Any perceived need for this as Blessed Sacrament Parish? How in your sense, would the days and hours be covered?

Guarding the Deposit of Faith

“O Timothy, guard the deposit entrusted to you, avoid the irreverent babble and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge” (1 Tim 6:20-21). These commands are really given to the whole church, in this case our parish, for the “you” in “grace be with you” in verse 21 is plural, indicating that the entire Church has a responsibility to attend to relevant teaching – the truth delivered to the saints once for all (Jude 3). How has our Blessed Sacrament Parish been frontal in increasing the parishioners knowledge in the Catholic doctrine? What is the perceived need here to “guard the deposit?”

- If proactive engagement, how has the Sunday evening catechetical instructions been very active with our parish church?
- Is it possible that the Hours between 5 and 5:50am before 6am mass be used for catechetical instructions? And what of the Hours 8:15am and 8:50am be used as much? Any other day within the week for the whole parish even if an evening program, like a Wednesday evening, from 4-6pm?
- Turning from the deposit ends in apostasy, have we capable hands, in our parish, to proactively engage our parish in “prevention is better than cure” attitude in this area?
- Our CCD groups, how strong are they with regard to our kids?
- Which societies, working on the word of God, are here with us? Example CBIU?
- How would they be encouraged to take up responsibilities in the area of doctrinal teachings? Could we open up our parish to some of these groups to come and establish us, in the Word-Doctrine of the Catholic Church?

Can our zones be centers for catechetical instructions and for sharing of deeper understanding of the Catholic doctrine? For zones to come together just for sharing the deposit of Faith – Sacred Oral Tradition + sacred scriptures - means that these smaller assembly could become spaces for small Christian communities, where the word is shared and lived.

How about owning a Blessed Sacrament Nursery and Primary School, to ensure proper Catholic Education into our children? Any perceived need? The hall could be converted into three story classroom edifice? Why not if not? Is there any perceived need here?

- Could we hold zonal competition on doctrinal knowledge?
When, what time of the year, can this possibly be done?

Building up the Body of Christ His Church:

- We have been called to build up the body of Christ, His Church, how has Blessed Sacrament Parish been involved in this injunction of the Lord?
- Physical structures have been built, for instance, the parish Church, the fathers' house and others. These are part and parcel of building His body, the Church. Are there yet other areas of perceived need? What about the asphalt church compound, the work that is left, yet to be done? Do we perceive this as a need? How best could this be tackled, especially now that rainy season is coming and the compound could be worse? What about keeping the Church Hall clean indeed?
- “For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another” (Rm 12: 4-5). How has the unity of members of the Blessed Sacrament Parish been, hitherto this moment? Rated accordingly, very good, good, or not so good. We are one body in Christ but many parts of men and women, boys and girls, children; people from Enugu State and others from outside the state. How has unity of the body of Christ maintained amidst our diversities? Share your story! During elections into various lay offices of different arms, zones and parish, how has our differences/gifts been harnessed to become our strength and source of strong bond of unity? Do

we have a perceived need here? How best can this be resolved?

- A particular group of people hijack offices and/or manipulate them from one parish administration to the next, using all sorts of negative diabolical means in achieving this. Do you see a need here? How can this be solved? The truth here is that self-interest/self-promotion is the sin here rather than interest in building up the body of Christ, the Church, in the bond of unity. Tell the story and proffer solutions.
- Which other areas of the parish life do you perceive a need to address unity issues within it? Tell story and proffer a solution.
- Blessed Sacrament Parish is one body/parish out of many bodies/parishes, and all other parishes are not as enriched as Blessed Sacrament parish, is there a perceived need for outreach to other parishes, especially in rural areas – real difficult terrains – as a way of maintaining the unity of spirit, in the bond of peace? Could Blessed Sacrament Parish “adopt” another rural parish(es) for all sorts of pastoral assistance? How would this be concretely achieved? Which areas of assistance do you have in mind?
- Blessed Sacrament Parish is one Church Community of the Catholic Church, surrounded by many other Christian ecclesial bodies, have you a perceived need for more enhanced ecumenical relationship? How would this be best achieved? Practical cooperation between us and they?
- Remaining in the unity of the body of Christ under the authority of the Bishop of Enugu diocese, whose domicile is within our Blessed Sacrament Parish, how would this bond of

unity be expressed concretely? Tell the story and share your thought on how this bond of unity could be fraternally expressed concretely with the Bishop who lives within our domain.

- Faithful obedience to the successor of Blessed Apostle Peter (Pope) and to the successors of the Apostles (the Bishops) is part of the growth in maintaining the bond of unity, how has Blessed Sacrament Parish fared in this call to obey apostolic authority and succession? Are there areas where the parish has been lacking in faithful obedience? Name them and tell the stories of each area of need. Do you have a way of addressing the need in mind? Is the Laity council, a church structure, functional in our parish? Why not, if not?
- Jesus tells His apostles, ‘he who hears you, hears me’. When we hear the bishops’ teaching on faith, on morals, we hear Christ Himself, would that the Bishop’s Lenten pastorals been heard by parishioners of Blessed Sacrament Parish? Could we make some of Bishop’s Lenten Pastoral our subject of Parish and zonal competition?
- “And I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will guide you with knowledge and understanding” (Jer 3:15). Yes, how has Blessed Sacrament parish remained under the guide of their Bishops and Pastors (Parish Priests)?
- Have we been more supportive of our pastors in their pastoral efforts than being critical or the reverse the case? Offering an expert opinion (giving a critique) is different from being derogatory (being critical) of the pastoral works of our pastors. How has Blessed Sacrament Parish been open to compassionate understanding with their priests than being

fixated over having a certain way of being priest as conditions for accepting them as genuine?

Fellow Workers: “Therefore we ought to support such men, so that we may be fellow workers with the truth”. (3 John 1:8) The support for God’s fellow workers in the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage them, how has this been experienced in Blessed Sacrament Parish?

d. Penance (Reconciliation)

- People are discouraged from time to time because of the struggles of the Christian life and eventual falling into outright sinfulness, how are they encouraged to take heart for the purpose of rising again? Any perceived need here?
- Sacrament of penance is celebrated every morning after mass, is this enough and has it assisted parishioners under the pain of mortal sins to utilize the sacrament, without which they cannot receive communion? If not, are there other ways to explore for the sake of assisting those who have fallen into sin?
- Are there common experiences of people receiving Holy Communion in unworthy state? While we are not to judge anyone, what could have been the cause for this and is there any way, in your opinion, this perceived need may be alleviated?
- One way many souls can fall into sin of an unforgiving spirit is the way of being unjustly treated – injustice. How has Blessed Sacrament Parish been sensitive to equity, giving each person his due, making/creating equal opportunities amongst its members? Have there been hurts sustained by unchanging

structures of unfair treatment? Tell the story. Do you have an idea of how we can move away from such unjust structure?

- Do you know about Diocesan Justice Development, Peace and Caritas Commission (JDPC). This is a commission that delves into justice issues because they believe that if there must be peace, then people should work for justice. Would the Blessed Sacrament Parish consult with Diocesan JDPC for the benefit of the parishioners? With this commission, justice issues are discussed and we, as a parish, could leverage on welcoming them into our parish family for the sake of conflict resolution and how to go about it when injustice occur? Any perceived need here?
- ***The poor in our midst:*** Are they left out? Does Blessed Sacrament parish have Welfare Committee to see to the distribution of Parish welfare items to the poor? Are there parish welfare items for the poor within Blessed Sacrament Parish? If not, why not? Any perceived need here?
- A Street inhabiting night life within our Parish? Penance talks about occasion of sin; do you see a need here for the daily occasions of sin presented by the “Nite life” in Igboeze Street of our Parish? Our sons and daughters could become victims of such entrapping situation. How would this challenge, which is both structurally and legally built, handled, for the purpose of overcoming them? There is certainly the spiritual overtone to this structure of occasions of sin. How would we lean on our Catholic wealth of spiritual strength to tackle the problem for the purpose of overcoming it? What of the patrons, some our parishioners, who may be beneficiaries of such structure for occasions of sin? We have to work with the Bishop here? How?

Consultations are needed here before we can do anything?
How? Who?

e. ***Anointing of the Sick***

- How has this sacrament been effectively utilized in our parish? Which day of the week or month is this sacrament necessarily given?
- Could we have visitation of the sick more regularly than before, every fortnight or at least every 3rd Thursday of the month besides emergency calls?
- Is there a possibility of visiting persons with disabilities, where prayers and ministry of the word would be celebrated? Could some societies volunteer here? Legion of Mary is already active here and they could lead in teaching other societies to begin. The lay readers could also carry the word of God to sick persons/disabled persons. The CCRN has the Evangelical Ministry and they could join in reaching out to our sick and disabled persons. Do you perceive a need here for our disabled ones for more community presence with them at this difficult moment?
- Attention of the Parish Priest is to be drawn to persons in need of the anointing the sick – not necessarily the last unction – but anointing of the sick for healing. Do our parishioners understand the difference?
- Yes, the anointing of the sick is now added during Adoration on Thursday evening, would this be extended to the ordinary sick persons in our various homes? How?
- The sick can also be the poor or needy in our midst. Often people die because of lack of medical treatment and this is

because of lack of access to medical treatment because of the inability to pay medical bills. How would our parish become compassionate in concrete assistance to the poor sick persons in our midst towards having access to medical treatment? Do you see a need here? Any perceived need and how would the parish, in your opinion, come forth to addressing this need?

- What about the elderly and sick members of our family, especially the widows and widowers? How have we, as a parish been connected continuously to these persons, who have been before us in the birth, growth and on-going development of our Parish? Without any meaningful continuous engagement with those who are no longer young, with the gift of patient tolerance, we leave a huge gap in that section in our on-going “communion of the saints”. These are the ones closest to our departed ancestors in faith. Any perceived need here? Has any elderly person ever died without extreme unction, the last rites, given due to inability to call a priest?
- Death of our fellow Christian touches us all. How has death of our fellow parishioners been sources of expression of our compassionate understanding both to the bereaved and to the deceased?
- The deceased persons need our prayers and the bereaved persons need our solidarity both in being available with and in assisting for burial/funeral arrangements. How has this been a moment for that Christian presence that help in healing hurts and converting souls? People hardly forget how they are treated during bereavement, have we used the occasion of death of members to win souls for Christ and for our Parish?

- Settlement of our debts notwithstanding, as factors into general reminder and invitation to be committed to duties of Christian demands of belonging as a social group, how has compassion and love been the overwhelming disposition towards the bereaved? Any perceived need here? Tell the story and give your solution on how we can enhance sense of solidarity towards our fellow parishioner at moment of bereavement.
- Have some members of our parish been ever abandoned or funerals postponed indefinitely because of lack of fund to do their funeral? How does it sound? If there ever is, would the Parish feel ashamed of not coming to the aid the deceased by assisting to give him or her befitting Christian funeral? Would such shame be translated into positive action off reviving/re-evaluation of the situation of such persons? Jesus, the Blessed Sacrament, is the compassionate One.

***f.* Holy Orders**

In the Church, there would always be need for those with the office entrusted to the apostles and these would be those sent to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, to guard the deposit of faith, to build up the body of Christ his Church, to guide and guard the holy people of God as devoted fathers, those to be welcoming and being merciful to the poor, to the stranger and to all who are in need and those to be praying ceaselessly to God, while seeking out the sheep who strays in order to gather them into the Lord's fold. These are persons in ordained ministry, the bishops, priests and deacons. They belong to the Sacrament of Orders.

Presently, eight (8) of such persons, are ministering in our parish, the Blessed Sacrament Parish, Independence Layout, Enugu. Is there a possibility that within our Parish there may be people who have vocation to the priesthood of Christ but do not know how to go about realizing their call? What of those who have not enough money for the training? Could such persons be identified, genuine seekers of the Lord's will in their life and possibility of becoming priests and/or religious but without enough money to fund their formation in the seminary or the convent?

- When such persons, are identified, would this Blessed Sacrament Parish be able to say clearly, “no one genuinely desiring to become a Priest/Religious will ever be denied for lack of fund”? Any perceived need here?
- Would parents/guardians of such candidates meet with the Parish Priest/Parish Council for discussions on terms of sponsorship? Would sponsorship be on basis that the candidate becomes a Priest/Religious, otherwise the amount for sponsorship is repaid when one resumes his/her job? Tell your story and let us know your sense of terms for such sponsorship.
- The seminarians/aspirants who are members of our parish, is there prospects of parish assistance, financial or otherwise as per their present training, their eventual ordination to the priesthood or profession to the religious life? Assistance and encouragement, any perceived need? Tell the story and give your solution on how we can tackle the need here?
- Hopefully the seminarians who do apostolic work with Blessed Sacrament Parish must have been considering themselves lucky because of generous treatment they receive from the

Parish and Parishioners in the past? How have they been properly encouraged and can this be improved upon? How would we do that in your own opinion?

- Often the Catholic Diocese of Enugu, during ordinations to the diaconate and priesthood, publish the space for sponsorship, would Blessed Sacrament Parish begin to attend to this publication, to fill up space amongst the sponsors?
- Priests work in difficult terrain in our diocese and our outreach towards such ordained persons would be wonderful. As already suggested, some kind of sustainable projects may be established for the purpose of assisting the priests welfare by the parish, for on-going support of whosoever comes in as parish priests. One project at a time after another for priest's welfare in difficult terrain? Do you see a need here for Blessed Sacrament Parish to become missionary in further outreach to priests in difficult terrain? How can this be addressed?
- Enugu diocesan priests in mission land abound – Benin diocese, Chad, the Cameroons, etc – and they, like the priests within our diocese in difficult terrain, need our support. Could occasional fundraising for priests in mission lands be accommodated in addition to diocesan effort? A priest in Chad, for instance, could be invited to tell his story and to have our material/prayerful support. This would be one way of reaching out to persons in ordained ministry as Blessed Sacrament Missionary Parish.
- Sick Priests/Retired Priests, these pose further outreach challenges for our Blessed Sacrament Parish? Do you see a need here? Are we connected to these ordained persons in awkward spots? The diocese is thinking of expanding the

structure of Parish houses and to build brand new retirement home for retired and sick priests, in order to take care of them, how would our parish be open to these means of outreach to these ordained ministers? Do you perceive any need and how would we, as a parish, be actively involved?

- Outreach to persons in episcopacy: our diocese of Enugu now inhabits three bishops, the substantive bishop of our diocese, the auxiliary bishop and the bishop emeritus. These are persons in ordained ministry, in the fullness of priesthood, who can become subject to our outreach. In addition to our filial obedience both to their guide, guard, as Chief Shepherds, could we relate to their persons and individual needs? Have we taken time to see what personal needs these shepherds of souls could be having and looking for ways, within our reach, to be connected to meeting those needs?. This could be a form of parish outreach to the ordained ministry. Bishop Obodo, for instance, has a farm, could we be constantly patronizing his farm or even become co-investors, if possible, just to help sustain what this person in ordained ministry is doing? And Bishop Gbuji, the one who actually created our parish, now in his 90s and must be in need of special medication for his overall health? Any possible frequent outreach to this elderly person in episcopacy? Do you see any need in outreach to persons in episcopacy within our diocese? How best do you think we could foster the outreach, both formerly like in all the contributions during Cathedraticum, Christmas visits, and informally as is being proposed here? How?
- Recognition of the authority of the successor of the blessed Apostle Peter is one of the means of outreach to ordained

ministry. Usually Peter's Pence, Holy Land Collection, Mission Sunday Collection etc, are the ways through which we get connected to the person who holds the chair of St. Peter, the Pope. How has Blessed Sacrament Parish been very faithfully active in support of these collections? The Pope's intentions for the Church and the world, do we know them and do we join in praying for the Pope's intentions? That way we get connected to all the spiritual wealth of the whole Catholic Church and the benefits therein. How have we made ourselves, as Blessed Sacrament Parish, available for these connections with the successor of the blessed Apostle Peter

g. Holy Matrimony

- How has Blessed Sacrament Parish fared with regard to living out this sacrament? Is it possible to ascertain number of our parishioners who have married in the church and still remain married? What of those who married but have not stayed married? The divorced marriages? The number of the annulled ones? Statistics is important here in order to see the impact at a glance.
- ***Understanding of Catholic marriage:*** For parishioners of Blessed Sacrament Parish, how has this been enhanced? The diocesan family life commission is here with us. Could our parish liaise with this commission for more training of personnel for teaching/facilitating our marriage course programs? Any perceived need here?
- Family formation program can be developed. Most persons, as parents, do not perceive the family as the smallest church assembly in the overall structures of the Catholic Church. But

that is what it is with the father as the “Chief Priest” to lead in family liturgies of prayer, morning and evening, prayer before meals, planning of pilgrimages, to make sure all family members attend and to see to the faithful practice of Catholic faith by all members within the family. Do you see a need here? Tell the story and offer some solutions on how family formation program could be developed.

- Training of children is becoming increasingly difficult for young parents? Do you see a need here, to assist young parents to enhance their knowledge of the dynamics of parenting? There is a program in Upper Room Ministry of our diocese, would those facilitators be tapped into for the purpose of assisting our young parents?
- Catholic Women Organization (CWO) of our Blessed Sacrament Parish has this good disposition towards bridging the gap between elderly and young mothers, could we enhance this bridge more by developing programs that young nursing mothers care about as part of the CWO outreach? What would these programs be and how could we have access to them?
- Single mothers and single fathers are in our midst and nobody talks about their situations. Is there a perceived need for these persons? Many women raised children out of wedlock as well as few men, could these benefit from our outreach? How would persons in these states, within our parish and who attend our parish church, be assisted? Any suggestion in your opinion, beginning with possible reconciliation with the church and progressing to psychological rehabilitation, etc?
- Block Rosary Centers have reduced in number within the streets of our parish – how could one explain this reduction

and its negative impact on our children? Our present Bishop has written a pastoral letter on going back to the Block Rosary Centers for early Catholic formation of our children but many do not take advantage of this invitation. How would Block Rosary Devotion be restored to the benefit of our children's early Catholic education growth? And then the Nursery and Primary School?

ORGANS: CMO, CWO, CYMO, CYW (CYON)

The diocese of Enugu, together with almost all the dioceses in Nigeria, has the four (4) Catholic organs: of men, the Catholic Men Organization (CMO); of women, the Catholic Women Organization (CWO); of young men, (CYMO)) and of young women, the (CYWO). These organs are lay organs and can be organized in such a way as to criss-cross one another like the Laity council and/or the CYON for the youth.

The reason for these lay organs, which is so to say a Nigerian unique reality, in the sense that overseas these are not significantly as organized as here, if at all, ranges from giving the groups opportunities of active participation of the laity in the Catholic Church, largely regarded as “the priestly church”, Uka Fada. By these organs, persons involved in them grow from one level of knowledge of the Church to the next, sharing both leadership positions and followership. The result is the sharpening of the Church's engagement with her members as it pertains its life and organizations.

The challenges facing the various organs range from effort at having all who are supposed to belong to it, to do really belong to the meeting of members with the financial obligations therein. To maintain or sustain the stability of members is still a challenge. It

may look better at the diocesan level than at the parish or station or zonal levels but the basic challenges are there at all levels

CMO

Basic problem is membership and sustenance of membership. Do you perceive the need here? Any solution to this? How?

CWO

Basic problem is membership and sustenance of membership. Often there is a chasm or great divide between the elderly mothers and/or young/nursing mothers. Their interests are often not at the same level and so there is a need for how this gap can be bridged. What of already suggested outreach to young/nursing mothers? They go to baby way, where their interests are addressed, and nothing prevents the elderly members of the CWO from borrowing materials from those other places where their interests are, presenting those materials as packages in an ongoing outreach to young mothers. That way effort are made and realized at bridging the gap between these two sets of Catholic Women. How would this be realized?

CYMO

Basic problem is membership and sustenance of membership. These young men are more hard-hit than the young women. The reasons are obvious, the realities they care about – football, gambling of all sorts, money making businesses of all sorts, stability in life, etc – seen to be outside the domain of the Church. But is this really so? Activities could be generated to engage their youthful energies. Do you see a need here? How best, in your opinion, could this need to met?

CYWO

The basic problem is membership and sustenance of membership. Not minding that these young women are more organized than their young men counterpart, there is a need here with the CYWO. The issues here are the interests of this age, the world and their existence and these being possibly provided in the Church. Which interest? Interests such as being adequate for the next vocation of matrimony; “Being adequate” can be a complex thing: from the desire to become somebody, having something at hand, as an instrument for meaningful contribution at her husband’s house to battling with age that can be passing by the gate of entrance to matrimonial life, etc. the question is how could Blessed Sacrament Parish become instrumental to assisting the young women address these interests? It is best when the Church provides answers to these interests, with corresponding moral support and encouragement. Do you perceive a need here?

YOUTH (CYON)

Although there are independent organs of CYMO and CYWO, the need for the criss-crossing of youths in common engagement with regard to matters of faith and morals is very obvious. Hence, the Catholic Youth Organization of Nigeria (CYON)! Is Blessed Sacrament Parish CYON in need of revival or is it active?. How, in your own opinion, would it be done if there is a need for revival? What about **youth engagement**? How shall we realize this? Youth empowerment programs like what? Olu Aka di mma?

LAITY COUNCIL OF NIGERIA

The formation of the four (4) organs may seem to make “a laity council” obsolete but it does not. The specific role of the laity in our society is for both male and female members of the laity who, more than the clergy, are out there in the world of commerce, economics, politics, etc. They need to bring the Christian Catholic presence and influence in these otherwise known as the world sphere. Would that our Blessed Sacrament Parish grow, through the laity council, in its consciousness of and realization of their roles in the world. How could our parish help in creating a formidable laity council? Your opinions are very important – state them.

PIOUS SOCIETIES:

How many societies do we have in our parish of Blessed Sacrament? Name them:

- Legion of Mary
- Catholic Charismatic Revival of Nigeria (CCRN).
- St Theresa
- Our Lady, undoer of Knots
- Any other? Like?

There used to be basic traditional pious associations within our diocese during the time of old – Legion of Mary, Blue Army of Our Lady, St. Anthony, St. Jude, Sacred heart of Jesus, Purgatorian society, Mary League Association for training in the value of virginity and chastity (living in dignity), and bible societies like Catholic Bible Society of Nigeria, Catholic Biblical Instructor’s Union CBIU, others and association of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, to mention but a few. Where have these traditional prayer groups gone to from our parish? There is more modern

apostolate like Our Lady Queen of Peace Apostolate (Peace Mountain), Our Lady of Perpetual Help, etc? Are these not societies to be associated with either Our Lord Jesus directly or with our Lady or with other saints of God? These associations are small groups that deal often with the faceless big Catholic Church Assembly, where one on one touch in relationship is almost impossible. These associations can be introduced into our parish, for our own good. These pious societies offer our parishioners opportunity of belonging to a spiritual organ/society necessary for growth unto the mature persons in Christ Jesus. If there are our parishioners who have not joined, what possibly could have been reasons for this? Give your opinion and proffer some possible ways of increasing these pious cities and getting our parishioners involved in them.

- Have there been theological teachings in the inner relationship between the pious societies? The need for such theological exposition of such inner relationship is important because it would reduce tensions often experienced between such associations, often with mutual derogatory looking-down-on exchanged between them and the consequent negative attitudes exhibited towards one another. The attitude of seeing other pious associations as completely “other” with stronger attitude towards them, is because one has not been able to see the connection, how the other pious association is able to identify with those other’ with fraternal feelings and attitude towards them.
- Another way we can increase the presence of pious association and our parishioners getting involved is by the way of pious

association fair. If pious association fair is organized, at least once year, the officers of each group, with vast knowledge about their group, would address the parish assembly on their spirituality and apostolate. Maybe such detailed exposition on a given pious association may be means through which the Holy Spirit could attract some souls towards a particular devotion.

- Which is better; a limited number of pious associations as away of avoiding lack of membership or as many as possible in number in order to give wider options for people to belong to at least one? Give the pros and cons of each and give your conclusion.

ZONES AND THEIR FUNCTIONALITY

The lay members of Christ's faithful, the people of God, often consider themselves passive participants in the planning and the deciding of a number of issues that bind their faith. But the new emphasis, coming from the second Vatican Council, is for them to consider themselves active participants in all that concerns their faith and spiritual growth. The zonal life offers that opportunity. Here parishioners, living proximate to one another are willing to come together with their wealth of experience, got from different works of life, to share with their zonal constituents. The forum, apart from being an opportunity for knowing themselves more closely, become a great privileged to keep being enriched on the roles our Catholic Christians should be playing in our zonal communities.

How have the zones of the Blessed Sacrament parish been living out the basic ideology and aim of zonal formation?

- i. Spreading the kingdom of God and of his Christ all over the earth for the glory of the Father?
- ii. Making all men partakers in Christ's redemption and our salvation?
- iii. Endeavouring to have the gospel spirit permeate and improve the temporal order?
- iv. Working for the evangelization and salvation of all people?
- v. Bearing witness to Christ and helping foster salvific mission?
- vi. Becoming a leaven in the world through their life and by vigor of their Christian spirit?
- vii. Converting our working and living centers (our zones) into ideal Catholic Christian communities, to be our brothers' keepers?
- viii. Living for the good of our next-door neighbour and conduct ourselves becomingly, compelling our brothers and sisters who are non-believers say of us "see how these Catholics love one another"?

How have our zones been responding to present day crisis situation and difficulty of living out our faith in the world and how have they been confronting many un-Christian solutions being offered today?

- i. A return to paganism/idolatry?
- ii. Mass conversion into occultic practices and having strong advocates within our zones?
- iii. Influence of fundamentalist sects, the so-called "Pentecostal living churches and their prosperity gospels"?
- iv. Political and ideological approach to faith?
- v. Physical structures that wall people inside a secluded life of solitude and self-centeredness?

How would our zones respond to the invitation to form a zonal Catholic Christian Community where the zones become once more the true Christian Communities?

- i. A praying community even for adults as well as for youths and children?
- ii. A community where the word of God is shared and lived out?
- iii. A dialoguing community with alternative Christian means of conflict resolution should there be misunderstanding amongst the Christian faithful?
- iv. Welfare community for members and non-members, the fruits of Christian charity and almsgiving manifest in Christian generous giving out for others?

FINANCE

You would agree with me that many considerations of possible pastoral involvements being proposed above have final implications. But it is also consoling to know that the Church already anticipates these implications and this is what she articulates with regard to the Church and her relationship with temporal goods, to which money is involved. “The properties or temporal goods are acquired and managed by the Church principally for the regulation of divine worship, the provision of fitting support for the clergy and other ministers, for carrying out the work of the sacred apostolate and of charity, especially for the needy (c.f. can. 254& 2)”.

From the above it can be seen that there was nothing within our proposals above which would not fall into one or other of the four categories, given above, for which money can be raised in the Church.

Normal source of fund for parish account has been the

- Project Sunday
- Harvest & Bazaar proceeds
- Donations, occasionally organized
- Charity

Any other possible sources of income for Account A?

Organizing a fund-raising committee charged with raising alternative sources of fund for the parish pastoral work. The reason is because the parish needs to live out the implications of certain sacraments in real life and this is financially capital intensive. There is the need to charge the committee with the responsibility of providing economic viable projects to be owned by the parish for the purpose of alternative revenue generation. Do you perceive a need here? The diocese is a model here. This means that Blessed Sacrament Parish could involve and evolve herself.

- Borehole services/water sales/tanker services
- Hostel Services of our Diocesan university
- Transportation services
- Business Center
- Farm Projects – Piggery/Poultry
- School (Nursery & Primary) Project
- Hospital
- Church & Digital Economy
- Others not known, not mentioned but which exists and is possible?

Would a five year investment plan, which would outlive the current team of serving ministers, not be a laudable effort in seeking for financial independence of Blessed Sacrament Parish? What is your

perceived need here? How best could this proposal assist our unemployed parishioners become gainfully employed?

There is a need to invite agents, experts, to address us on possibilities in this area. Do you know who to invite? Throw him/her out!

MATCHED AGAINST A HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Often one hears in Blessed Sacrament Parish, “we have a history” and this refers frequently to reactions against new proposals as opposed to “the way we used to do things here” within Blessed Sacrament Parish. But truly every parish has a “history” which when looked at critically, as an expert opinion would, has much to reveal about the reason why things are the way they are. To live in the present moment is to have had a past that most probably shaped the present moment and would probably shape the future moment, negatively too, unless there is a form of divine/human intervention.

To critically look at the history behind present day Blessed Sacrament as a “sacred history” would be something worthwhile and even necessary if we will be able to discover why some realities, albeit unpleasant, are with us. And unless these backgrounds are unraveled and dealt with, the entire edifice we try to build on such cracked foundation would surely crumble. All the proposals made above would best be accomplished when we are courageous enough to look at the unrighteous inheritances that form part of our “assets and liabilities” as we possess the land which we owe as Blessed Sacrament Parish. There was a history. We would explore this at length as our dialogue deepens,