

The Mission of the Church

The following information is drawn from Handbook for Parish Pastoral Councils produced by the Archdiocese of Brisbane. http://bne.catholic.net.au/faithlife/fl.php/store/parish-life_1152/parish-pastoral-council-handbook-3rd-edition_1144

The Mission of the Church, the People of God, can be understood as the continuation of the work of Jesus, which will proceed until God's values of love, justice and peace reign in the hearts and lives of people of all nations.

Four of the basic elements of the Church's mission may be described as:

- **Proclaiming** the good news of God's love throughout the world
- **Inviting** more and more people into the community of disciples
- **Sanctifying** by encouraging the whole community of faith to grow in holiness
- **Transforming** the world until justice, love and peace prevail

The following characteristics are evident, in varying degrees, in a mission-focussed Christian community, conscious of its union with Christ.

Attractiveness

The community is recognised and valued as a source of spiritual nourishment, belonging, healing, meaning, personal transformation and challenge.

Hospitality

Each member of the community recognises and takes on a personal responsibility to welcome newcomers. A deep sense of respect for the dignity and worth of every person is a principle that underlies every action.

Inclusiveness

There is a spirit of inclusion in the community for everyone irrespective of age, personal circumstance, ability, behaviour, ethnicity, lifestyle preference, disability and degree of involvement.

Outward focus

The community actively embraces a life-giving focus directed towards recognising and responding to issues of concern within society generally. Members are encouraged and supported in their efforts to permeate all aspects of life with God's values of love, justice and peace. Working with like-minded people in the wider community, they continually challenge the unjust treatment of people and their environment, locally and globally.

The characteristics outlined form a framework within which Pastoral Councils can evaluate their efforts to build a vital Christian community focused on living and promoting the mission of the Church.

Anning, C., *Handbook for Parish Pastoral Councils - Third Edition*, Faith&Life Archdiocese of Brisbane, 2007, pp. 6-7

Questions to consider:

- To what extent are these characteristics evident in your community?
- How might your Parish Pastoral Council use these characteristics as a framework to inform your work?