Thoughts on current program layout:

Since we plan on “sending people forth” with the open eyes and hearts focus, might “You Are Mine” be a better opening song? Or could we use “Open Our Eyes” as both opening and closing?

The second page of the Scripture reading appears too crowded with the illustration as it is. Might it be able to be cropped so we only see the picture of the man near the pool? Or to leave it as is, could we delete the last paragraph of the scripture, since we don’t refer to it in our reflection, thus leaving more room?

With reference to the back page, I have been thinking that the switch to the question, while it would make them think, is too abrupt a change. They have listened, reflected and shared … now we need to lead them into this section a bit more smoothly, I think, if we want to get the full effect of the question when we do ask it. So please look at the transition as it might be done and suggest how it might be improved.

With this in mind, the back cover would have on it the following:

PRAYER EXPERIENCE: WORSHIP AND WELCOME

Quote from pastoral plan

Questions:

How comfortable am I with the idea of worship and welcome at the Mass and other communal liturgies?

How much attention do I pay to those around me when I participate in the Mass and other liturgies?

Sharing in two’s

Question:

What are one or two actions that I might wish to take to become more welcoming to those around me when we come together for prayer and worship?

Here we might wish to put in an area marked “Notes” with a space for them to write their ideas or some others they may have heard in the discussion

I don’t know how this will space out but if we don’t need to put the lyrics for “Open” we may have space to put the picture from the scripture page (I don’t know how much of the pastoral plan you would want to put on this page.

Any ideas?

PRAYER EXPERIENCE: WORSHIP AND WELCOME

Up to this point, we have been reflecting on the Scripture of the Man Born Blind and the spiritual challenges it may reveal for us. We continue by inviting you to consider the current theme of the Parish Pastoral Plan, “worship and welcome”, and the challenges it may present. For many of us, it may differ from the way we presently view the Maas as primarily a time of private, personal worship

The Mass, however, is much more than that …. It is a communal celebration, in which our shared participation enriches our experience of the sacrifice of Jesus, both on Calvary and in his real presence in the Eucharist. Many of us have been taught not to look at people around us, as a way of showing that we respect their private worship. And yet we pray together, sing together, receive Holy Communion together, in a time-honored tradition. During the Mass we interact with each other at specific points in the liturgy.

At the very beginning, when we recite the Confiteor together, we ask Blessed Mary ever Virgin, all the angels and saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord, Our God. How nice to think that everyone is praying for me … until I realize that this calls for me to pray for each person in the church with me. A different view, to be sure.

As we continue, I’m sure you’ve all experienced people extending their hands to you during the Our Father without even looking at you or acknowledging you, dropping your hand immediately when the song is over. Or the limp fish hand that is extended to you with the mumbled “Peace be with you,” again moving on as soon as possible.

How do I measure up here? Do I smile, look each person in the eye and speak sincerely? Do I smile when I enter a pew, and perhaps at the end of Mass say a couple of words … just think, even the cashiers in the supermarket wish me a “Nice Day.” Surely we can do a little better than that as followers of Jesus, fellow members of the Body of Christ.

But let’s us look at the actual statement from the Plan on the back of your program. We’ll read it together (?)

Quote

Sometimes we think of the Pastoral Plan as a document developed for the clergy, religious and staff, to suggest the actions they will take to bring this about. Actually, it is a goal for each of to embrace, to see how we may act to become part of the welcoming parish we envision. Let’s take a few moments of silent reflection on the following questions:

How comfortable am I with the idea of worship and welcome at the Mass and other communal liturgies?

How much attention do I pay to those around me when I participate in the Mass and other liturgies?

(Pause)

Let’s turn to the person next to us and briefly share in two’s some of our reflections on these questions. (5 minutes)

Now let’s move on to some of the actions that we might wish to take to be more welcoming to those around us when we come together for prayer and worship. What are one or two actions that you might like to put into practice in the weeks to come? Let’s ask the Holy Spirit to give us some ideas and write them on the cards that we received before we went into our sharing groups earlier. And please print or write clearly, because we’ll be passing these ideas on to Msgr. Tom and the staff.

If you’ve finished with your card, would anyone like to share your ideas? (10 minutes)

Thanks so much. At this point we’ll be passing a couple of baskets to collect your ideas … you might wish to jot down a couple of reminders on the back of your program for yourself – your own ideas or maybe some you’ve heard that you might wish to try. These baskets will be brought up to the altar at the Masses this weekend.

Now let’s extend our hands toward the basket and ??? will lead us in prayer that we may be faithful in our efforts to become a welcoming person and to enjoy the presence of those who worship with us.

And in this spirit, let’s exchange a word of peace with each other.

Closing song

Sending forth: Go, you are sent forth with open eyes and hearts, to welcome and to worship as part of our parish community.

Changes to program:

Back page

Use ‘You are Mine” as opening song … Opn Our Eyes fits so well with closing and sending.

Picture in scripture … too crowded