

With the restoration of the Sunday/holyday obligation on Pentecost Sunday comes the need to take a long hard look at the situation within our parish.

Prior to the pandemic we had enough ministers of the word and ministers of holy communion to be able to put together a rota for Sunday Mass as well as readers at weekday Mass – my list contains the names of seventeen ministers. Over the course of the pandemic a number of them have stopped coming to Mass and haven't yet returned. The reality, therefore, is that they were commissioned to their ministry for service to the parish but they are currently not fulfilling that commitment.

The pandemic was also responsible for the fact that the diocese had to suspend its usual programme for recommissioning ministers – meaning, in effect, that most ministers' commissioning will have lapsed although it was hoped they would continue to function until things returned to normal. So the first question for our own ministers is: do you wish to continue in your ministry? If not then I would ask you, please, to notify me of that decision. On the other hand, if hopefully you intend to continue ministering, then I need you to make yourself available so that John can put together a new rota beginning at Pentecost.

We also need new offers of help from people who have perhaps been considering ministering as readers or in the distribution of holy communion. Please contact me if you would like to find out more. And it's no good leaving it up to others – the reality is that the parish cannot function properly without the assistance of ministers – including readers at weekday Mass (I am currently reading at those Masses but shouldn't be if commissioned readers are available). We also need a new team of ushers to carry out duties at the back of church and to take up the collection at Mass – again please contact me. And at some point we also need to put together a new Pastoral Council, Finance Committee, and counting teams. It has been encouraging to see a number of young families at Mass and this is an ideal opportunity for them to become involved – the future of the parish is in their hands.

There have been considerable changes in our parish community during the last two years or so (thankfully only one or two deaths but quite a number of people who have become housebound) but now that numbers at Mass are beginning to pick up again - and hopefully they will continue to pick up with the reintroduction of the Sunday obligation - we have to reorganise our resources and renew our individual commitments if the parish is going to function once again as it should. I have appealed in the newsletter a couple of times recently but sadly there has been no response whatsoever. You can't leave these things to someone else – your parish needs you!

