

### **Faith Development initiative:**

A survey of parishioners in 2007 revealed that people were seeking a place within the heart of parish where they could talk openly about their faith and where they were at in their lives. In response the Pastoral Council, encouraged by our priests, organised monthly meetings in Our Lady's Hall between October and May where invited speakers addressed central questions of faith and parishioners were able to chat with each other before an informal cup of tea. The meetings opened and closed with prayer and the adventure is now going into its third year. Speakers to date have included John Waters, Fr. Peter McVerry, Sr. Una Agnew, Tony Hanna, Senator Ronan Mullen, Sean Goan, Carol Barry, Fr. Kevin O'Gorman and Andrew O'Connell. The council is currently reflecting on where to take this initiative in the coming Year of Evangelisation. While we are delighted with the attendance and the interest raised we are wondering how we can reach out more effectively to younger people. The Council welcomes the views of parishioners in these matters.

### **Child Protection**

One of the roles of the Pastoral Council is to develop diocesan policy at local level. A particularly important area where this has happened is in the provision of the safest possible environment for children and for having policies and procedures for child protection in place. Through a special committee the Pastoral Council collated relevant material and engaged with parents and those working with children in the parish to draw up our parish guidelines. A Child Protection representative was appointed and trained. A child protection policy statement was agreed and placed with phone numbers and contacts at strategic points. Upholding diocesan policy includes the vetting of parish volunteers through the Garda Vetting Section. All documents required by the Archdiocese were signed off and returned to Archbishops house.

### **Communication**

Communication is an area where three sub-committees are currently working. One helps with the Weekly Newsletter while another works on the maintenance and updating of the parish website [www.dalkeyparish.org](http://www.dalkeyparish.org). A third committee works on the parish register data base.

### **Parish Register Data Base**

For reasons of understanding and communication, it is always a foundational task is to 'describe' the parish. In census returns 70% of people within our parish boundaries say they are Catholic but it is not always easy to say where they are. Only a proportion of parishioners have responded to the invitation to fill out registration forms. A reliable and up to date register of parishioners can be very useful pastorally and it is an ongoing task to keep it up to date. The data base sub-committee has recently tested the data base for accuracy and checked its information against the current electoral register. The group is considering further ways of gathering information and keeping the register up to date. A licence under data protection legislation is updated annually. Parishioners can help greatly by registering with the parish office.