

7 May 2026

Dear Parishioners and friends,

Thank you to everyone who attended and contributed to our first community consultation session last Saturday regarding the future parish precinct. We are deeply grateful for the thoughtful, passionate and prayerful feedback shared throughout the afternoon.

The purpose of this first session was “blue sky thinking” or an opportunity to begin imagining together what could be possible for the future of our parish community. The question we explored was: **“What is the most important consideration for the future of the new MQOF parish precinct?”**

It was clear from the discussion that there is both hope and concern surrounding this project. We want to acknowledge that honestly and respectfully. Many people expressed excitement about the opportunities a new precinct in the heart of the city could bring, while others shared understandable worries about change, identity, finances, accessibility and the future of our existing parish communities. Overall, we heard a deep love and care that everyone has for their spiritual home. Every contribution was valued and heard.

Several key themes consistently emerged from the feedback:

- A shared desire to **follow God’s will and pray for those making decisions**. The desire is to ensure that any future development strengthens the identity, mission, and unity of the parish.
- A strong desire for any future church to clearly **look and feel like a Catholic church** from the outside and within. The desire is to be a sacred, traditional, beautiful and reverent place of worship that reflects our faith and traditions. A standalone building that stands out, offers peace amid the busyness of the city, and serves as an oasis for prayer.
- The importance of maintaining a **strong sense of community, belonging and welcome**, especially as the parish continues to grow and become even more multicultural and intergenerational.
- **Accessibility** and practicality, including parking, public access, mobility considerations, safety, and ease of access for parishioners of all ages and abilities.
- The need for spaces dedicated to prayer and spiritual life, including requests for an **Adoration Chapel** and quiet areas for personal reflection and contemplation.
- There is also a strong sense of **hope and opportunity**. Many parishioners see the potential for unity becoming one parish, one community, with all ministries under one roof. They envision improved outreach, better access to services like Mary’s Pantry, Catholic Care, youth services, ministry spaces and support for families and those in need. They see a precinct that welcomes not only Catholics but also non-Catholics seeking support or a safe space. They see the

possibility of a spiritual home that continues to grow with the increasing population of Blacktown, meeting both current and future needs.

- **Youth involvement** emerges as a priority. Parishioners insist that young people must have a voice in shaping the future church. They want a church that inspires young Catholics, provides space for ministries, and supports families.
- Questions and concerns around **financial and environmental sustainability, transparency**, capacity, and the future of the current parish and school sites.
- A recognition that **change can be difficult**, particularly given the deep attachment many parishioners have to St Patrick's and St Michael's. Some shared feelings of uncertainty, grief or hesitation about what a future transition could mean.
- A desire for **continued and genuine consultation** and authentic parish involvement as the process progresses.

We also heard many expressions of faith, hope and prayerfulness throughout the afternoon, including encouragement to remain open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit as discernment continues.

Ultimately, the community dreams of a church that is welcoming, safe, beautiful, and unmistakably Catholic - a spiritual home that preserves the parish's identity while embracing growth, unity, and mission. They hope for a place where people can pray, gather, serve, and encounter Christ, without losing the warmth, reverence, and sense of belonging that define their current parish life.

What's next?

This consultation was the beginning of the conversation, not the conclusion. No final decisions have been made, and ongoing community engagement will remain an important part of the process moving forward.

As we mentioned, this is the first part of Phase 2 – gathering community feedback that will then inform the Business Case and Feasibility Study. We recognise that there are many more members of the community that we would like to hear from. So, if you would like to assist in helping to listen to the community, please email us at blacktownproject@parracatholic.org

We would also like to supplement this with online feedback on the question raised on the day. Please go to our site and [fill in this form](#). You can be anonymous or provide your details, and we will include this as part of the feedback.

Thank you again for the care, honesty and love for the parish community that you brought to the discussion. Please continue to keep this process, parish leadership, project leadership and one another in your prayers.

Kind regards,

Blacktown Project Team