

2. Are we a welcoming Church?

BACK TO CHURCH SUNDAY can be a brilliant success if congregations get behind the campaign and invite their friends along.

It can also be a dismal failure if you get people along and they are not made to feel welcome.

If our guests on Sunday 12th September are given the cold shoulder or can find fault with the way they are treated, then all our efforts could be in vain.

Over the page are some things to think about to help us become a welcoming Church....



“ I came because you personally invited me”

Recently I met Rosemary. She returned to Church recently after many years of absence. Rosemary had been brought up to go to Church but she married a non Christian and did not want to put pressure on her marriage by continually attending.

So for many years Rosemary steered clear of Church. Then her marriage collapsed and Rosemary thought she would like to return. It took her a long time to summon up the courage to go back. Her return was helped by a friend inviting her to come. When she did turn up at Church she was amazed at the welcome she received. She knew she had come home and she told me of the joy and relief it was.

I believe there are lots of people like Rosemary in our community. For all sorts of reasons they have stopped going to Church, but would love to return. But that takes a lot of courage. All sorts of fears encourage them to put off the day. They fear they might not know the hymns or songs. They fear people might be unfriendly and not talk to them. They fear people might ask embarrassing questions.

A LOT OF PEOPLE ARE NOW GOING
BACK TO CHURCH ONCE AGAIN



THIS IS USUALLY BECAUSE THEY
HAVE FORGOTTEN SOMETHING LIKE
THEIR KEYS OR JACKET OR GLASSES

**IT IS THE HOPE OF
BACK TO CHURCH SUNDAY
THAT EVERYONE ON
SUNDAY 12th SEPTEMBER
MIGHT FIND THEMSELVES
IN A CHURCH WORSHIPING
GOD AND FINDING PEACE
AND SALVATION FOR THEIR
SOUL.**

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BacktoChurchSunday

TIPS FOR BEING A WELCOMING CHURCH

The Basics:

1. Clean up. Is the outside of your church clean and tidy?
2. Comfort. Do you use travel rugs and cushions on pews for example, to make it as comfy as possible?
3. Loos. Are they stocked up with all they need? How about some nice soap?

The Welcome:

4. We are **ALL** called to be welcomers. First impressions are important. **ALL** of us need to genuinely welcome new people with a smile. Welcoming people with a snarl is not going to help create a positive atmosphere.
5. If we see someone on their own, we need to go and talk to them. It would be sad if no one talked to you. No one should be left standing or sitting on their own. Go and talk to them and introduce yourself to them.
6. If you're bringing a special guest: pick them up and bring them—why not have breakfast with them before the service or lunch with them afterwards. Make the most of your time together.

The Service:

7. If you have invited someone to come, please sit with them and explain the customs of the church like the passing of the peace, the collection, or when to stand and sit. Don't assume anything.

Afterwards:

8. Invite your friends to have a cuppa in the hall. Fresh coffee and quality biscuits give a clear message that you value the people there.
9. Introduce your friends around to others.



BacktoChurchSunday

comeasyouare

SUNDAY 12th SEPTEMBER 2010

8am Anglican Parish of Christ Church, Essendon
9.30am Anglican Parish of Christ Church, Essendon

**IF EVERONE INVITED AND BROUGHT ALONG ONE FRIEND —
WHAT A GREAT CELEBRATION WE COULD HAVE...**

When Marion was invited to church by her friend Anne she thought 'Why not?'

"I don't think I have ever been to a church service where I have laughed so much."

After attending Back to Church Sunday at St Mary's Haversham in Oxford Diocese, it changed the way she thought of church.

"Churches to me were always cold, severe places in many ways, where you went and got preached at and told off on a Sunday - it wasn't much fun. Now it's different. It's very welcoming. I don't remember church being like that in my youth."

For more information please contact our Parish Priest:

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