

## MINUTES OF THE PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETING

Held at St. Columba's on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2022 at 7.00pm

PRESENT: Fr. William, Deacon Lawrence, Pauline Rourke, Carol Galvin, Ann McCarthy, Tim Moore, Anne Mosquera, Eileen Irwin, Peter Devine, Matthew Petts, Amy O'Donnell, Sue McCarthy & Nuala Keegan

The meeting opened with a prayer led by Fr William. Tim requested that we pray especially for the world situation.

		<b>Action</b>
1.	<b>Apologies.</b> Apologies were received from: Fr James, Lynsey Weightman and Sue Carr.	
2.	<b>Welcome and introductions.</b> Pauline welcomed all members of the Pastoral Council to the first full meeting since September 2021.  A special welcome was extended to new members Matthew Petts and Sue McCarthy. Helen Connor had also kindly agreed to become a member of the Pastoral Council but was unable to attend on this occasion.	
3.	<b>To receive and approve the minutes of the meeting held on 13 September 2021.</b>  The minutes were approved.	
4.	<b>Matters arising from the minutes.</b>  There were no matters arising from the minutes which were not included on the agenda.	
5.	<b>Bishop Mark's Discernment and the Diocesan Report on the Synod submissions.</b>  Pauline noted that copies of our submission, Bishop Mark's Discernment and the Diocesan Report on the Synod submissions had been distributed to parishioners at Masses over the previous two weeks.  Pastoral Council members expressed disquiet and disappointment with the Discernment and the Diocesan Report. It was considered these did not accurately reflect the views of our parishioners. Many of the issues raised in our submission had been overlooked or, if incorporated in the texts, were dismissed and their significance downgraded.	

	<p>Anne commented that the Discernment and Report appeared defensive, heavily process-driven and lacked empathy.</p> <p>Matthew observed that there appeared to be a significant divergence between the Diocesan documents and the views of the laity.</p> <p>Pauline noted that the Report shows that submissions have been read but considered that there was evidence of a disconnection between the views expressed in our submission and the Diocesan documents.</p> <p>Pauline reported that she had spoken to Barbara Davies, who had confirmed that the Discernment and the Diocesan Report were the documents which would go forward to the Bishop’s Conference from Shrewsbury Diocese.</p> <p>Pauline noted that there was growing concern about the position taken by some Bishops and members of the hierarchy regarding their disengagement with the laity in the Synod process.</p> <p>She tabled three recent articles from The Tablet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“English and Scottish bishops sign letter criticising German Synod”</i> (1 April)</li> <li>• <i>“German Synod becomes a proxy battle over the Francis papacy”</i> (8 April)</li> <li>• <i>“Topic of the week: Bishops discern what the faithful say”</i> (20 April)</li> </ul> <p>Fr William commented that he believed there was a route through which the disappointment expressed in the Pastoral Council could be transmitted to the Bishop. He outlined the possible role of the Acting Dean, Fr Paul Shaw, in coordinating a meeting of representatives of other Pastoral Councils to discuss areas of common concern. Fr William explained that he would be in contact with Fr Paul to ask his view about arranging such a meeting and he would feedback to the Pastoral Council on this point.</p>	Fr William
6.	<p><b>Consultation on changes to be made in the Parish – summary of responses and feedback to parishioners.</b></p> <p>Pauline detailed the process of analysing and summarising the responses from parishioners, which had been undertaken by herself, Ann and Nuala. She confirmed that all the original comments cards had been retained and could be examined. Pastoral Council member had received copies of the document and it was proposed to distribute copies at masses over the next two weekends.</p> <p>To illustrate a couple of actions which were already underway Nuala thanked Anne for the multilingual “Everyone</p>	

	<p>is Welcome” poster and advised that Fr William had commissioned this to be produced as 2 pop up banners (for St Columba’s). A further one could be produced for St Theresa’s, if desired. Nuala was making enquiries about images and production costs.</p> <p>In addition, Nuala reported on the emergence of a new Children’s Liturgy team at St Columba’s. The DBS process for four individuals was underway, contact had been made with the Diocese for training and support and, if possible, it was hoped to launch a once a month Children’s Liturgy at 11.00 mass at the beginning of June.</p> <p>Peter asked whether there were any male volunteers on the team. Nuala commented that there were not, yet. It was hoped that men could be recruited. Peter noted that he had been involved some years ago and was willing to become involved again. He believed that in so doing this might encourage younger fathers to step forward. Peter agreed to approach some potential male helpers.</p> <p>Ann enquired whether it might be possible to contact the Catholic High School and invite 6<sup>th</sup> form students taking Religious Studies/Theology A levels to participate as helpers.</p> <p>Amy agreed to discuss this possibility with the Director of the Sixth Form.</p> <p>Anne asked whether, in designing the programme, children would participate in the opening parts of the mass, including music, withdraw for their own Liturgy and then return. She hoped that the entire mass would, therefore, be “child-friendly” and accessible. This view was supported by the Pastoral Council.</p> <p>Pauline confirmed that feedback to parishioners and devising a plan for change would be implemented through three parish meetings, the dates of which had been given in recent newsletters. It had been necessary to make one date amendment. Nuala confirmed that the dates and times of the Parish meetings were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tuesday 10 May at 7.00pm, St Columba’s Hall</li> <li>• Tuesday 17 May at 7.00pm at St Theresa’s Centre</li> <li>• Thursday 19 May at 2,30pm at St Columba’s Hall</li> </ul>	<p>Peter</p> <p>Amy</p>
7.	<p><b>Format of parish meetings</b></p> <p>Nuala referred members to a draft proposal document, including guidance for facilitators, which had been previously circulated.</p>	

<p>She highlighted the suggested programme and observed that it had been influenced by a desire to keep the meeting to a manageable length (1.5) hours.</p> <p>Nuala briefed members on the use of the Pastoral Responses document in parallel with a decision making tool – an Urgency and Impact matrix. She illustrated how, using the matrix, table discussions could be enabled to reach a decision on the relative priority of a possible action. She suggested that a potential Development Plan could be designed over a timeframe which reflected high priority issues (start within 6 months), medium priority issues (start within 12 months) and low priority issues, (start thereafter).</p> <p>It was proposed that table groups be limited to 6 people, including a facilitator, although it was acknowledged that this would need to be adjusted at each meeting depending on attendance.</p> <p>Nuala explained that feedback would be taken from each table but would be limited to recording high priority issues, to avoid the meeting over running. Copies of the completed matrices from each table would be gathered at the end so that all the outcomes were retained.</p> <p>Nuala noted that for the meetings to be effective volunteer facilitators would need to be identified. These could be members of the Pastoral Council or other parishioners.</p> <p>It was agreed that facilitators would be as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 May - Matthew, Sue McC, Anne, Nuala, Pauline, Tim.</li> <li>• 17 May – Sue McC, Pauline, Eileen, Amy, Anne, Ann</li> <li>• 19 May – Sue McC, Pauline, Anne, Ann.</li> </ul> <p>It was agreed that the following parishioners would also be invited to act as facilitators:</p> <p>David Savage, Cathy Murphy, Mark Traynor, Carol Traynor, Gill Blatch, Denise Lusk, Christine Hare, Jim McHugh and Jane Walsh.</p> <p>It was agreed that Pauline. Ann and Nuala would contact potential volunteers.</p> <p><i>After the meeting it was agreed to produce a step by step guide for facilitators. Actioned by Nuala and agreed by Pauline and Ann.</i></p> <p>In closing Nuala noted that the objective for the meetings was the emergence of a Development Plan, matched with the necessary volunteers to take responsibility for making change happen.</p>	<p>Pauline, Ann, Nuala</p>
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	<p>Pauline commented that she, Ann, Nuala and Eileen would give a short address after masses over the next two weekends to update parishioners on the process to date and to encourage them to attend the meetings.</p> <p>Fr William expressed thanks, on behalf of himself and Fr James, to the members of the Synod sub-committee for the extensive work done to date. He commented on the shared sense of optimism and momentum which had been generated.</p>	
8.	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p>1. Fr William asked Ann to give an update on the meeting of the Social Committee.</p> <p>Ann advised that the Committee had met recently, and two events were now in planning as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A parish BBQ after 11.00 mass at St Columba's on Sunday 12 June</li> <li>• A musical evening to be held at St Theresa's at the end of July, date to be agreed</li> </ul> <p>2. Fr William noted that Fr James was currently on retreat, returning at the weekend. Fr William would be on retreat next week – 2- 6 May.</p>	Anne
8.	<p><b>Date of the next meeting.</b></p> <p>Tuesday 7 June at 7.00pm. St Theresa's venue to be confirmed.</p>	

The meeting concluded with a prayer led by Deacon Lawrence and a blessing by Fr William.