MINUTES OF THE PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETING

Held at St. Columba’s on 13th January 2022 at 2.30pm

PRESENT: Fr. William, Deacon Lawrence, Pauline Rourke, Carol Galvin, Tim Moore, Nuala Keegan & Eileen Irwin.

The meeting opened with prayers led by Deacon Lawrence and Fr. William.

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|  | | **Action** |
| 1. | **Apologies.**  Apologies were received from: Anne Mosquera, Amy O’Donnell, Lynsey Weightman, Ann McCarthy, and Sue Carr.  Anne Mosquera had submitted written observations which were copied to all present. |  |
| 2. | **Purpose of the meeting.**  It was noted that the meeting was an Extraordinary Meeting of the Pastoral Council to consider the response of the parish to the invitation from Pope Francis to a General Synod of the Church. |  |
| 3. | **Introductory Remarks**  Pauline thanked Deacon Lawrence for his briefing paper, which it was agreed should form the basis of the discussion. Some further papers were circulated, including articles from the Catholic press:   * “*The True Purpose of Synod”,* The Tablet, 8th January 2022 * “*A Synod for the world”*, The Tablet, 1st January 2022   Copies available in the office. |  |
| 4. | **Synodal process and local timetable**  The meeting noted the information from the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales which described the synodal process as one of “*journeying together towards Christ*” and “*a pilgrimage of the whole People of God in discerning the way the Church needs to be in its localities and worldwide”*  The meeting observed that the process had commenced with a *listening phase* in October 2021 and that the parish had acknowledged this with the Synod Prayer at masses in recent months. Parishioners had been encouraged to consider the invitation to pray and reflect.  The timescale was now very short within which the parish could submit written reflections to the Bishop’s Office on 1st March 2022.  Anne M’s paper was discussed in detail, and it was agreed that this offered many thoughtful ways in which the parish might actively engage in the synodal process. However, due to the limiting nature of the current Covid situation and the short timeframe a more condensed approach was required.  Pauline proposed that formal thanks be extended to Anne M. for her valuable suggestions and observations.  This was agreed by all present. | Nuala |
| 5. | **Proposed Parish programme**  Pauline noted that elements of Lawrence’s paper might be combined to form a deliverable programme within the time available. These were a four-week programme of addresses given at mass, to provide a general overview and core themes of **Communion, Participation** and **Mission.**  This was agreed by the meeting in principle.  Discussion followed on how to provide the content for such addresses and the importance of lay involvement. It was proposed that members of the Pastoral Council undertake to deliver some of them.  Lawrence observed, and this was confirmed by Fr William, that that the overview (week 1) should be delivered by  Fr. William, Fr. James, and Lawrence.  Consideration was given to the fact that with four masses each weekend, over a period of four weeks, a total number of 16 sessions would be delivered. Pauline observed that six Pastoral Council members (or others) would be needed to deliver the addresses after masses in St Columba’s and St Theresa’s (weeks 2, 3 and 4) if each undertook to do this at the Saturday and Sunday Mass.  The meeting confirmed this approach, and it was agreed that the programme would conclude with a Holy Hour in each church.  The programme would provide both context and information, enabling people of the parish to make observations, raise questions and offer their reflections and submit these via collection points in each church. They would be encouraged to visit the parish website, where further information was available. They would be advised that it was also possible to make direct personal written representations to the Bishop.  The meeting endorsed this approach and agreed that the Synod is open to all the people of the church who are invited to think, reflect and pray about what the Church needs to be, at this time and in the future.  Lawrence agreed to provide content for the addresses, which would be no longer than 5/6 minutes. They would be prepared using accessible and engaging language and distilling the key themes.  With this support the following members of the Pastoral Council agreed to present these:  Tim Moore, Pauline Rourke, Carol Galvin, and Nuala Keegan.  Eileen suggested that Ann McCarthy may be willing to undertake this, and Nuala noted that considering her written contribution, Anne Mosquera could also be invited to take part. It was agreed to approach them both. | Lawrence  Eileen/Nuala |
| 6. | **Programme delivery timetable**  After reviewing the preparation necessary and the pressing deadline of 1st March, the meeting agreed that the programme should adopt the following timetable:   * Week 1 29/30 January - Overview * Week 2 5/6 February - Communion * Week 3 12/13 February - Participation * Week 4 19/20 February - Mission   This will culminate with a Holy Hour in each Church in the week commencing 21st March with the submission to the Bishop’s Office immediately thereafter. |  |
| 7. | **Next Steps**  It was agreed to:   * reconvene the meeting on Tuesday 18th January at 2.30pm in the Iona Chapel, St Columba’s to consider publicity and awareness raising and to develop the content of the addresses to be delivered * provide notes of the discussion to all Pastoral Council members * read and review circulated papers and website information currently available | All  Nuala  All |
| 8. | **Any Other Business**  Tim asked for consideration to be given to the continuation of live streaming mass.  It was generally agreed that the live streaming should continue as it is important to engage those members of the parish who are unable to attend mass in person in the current circumstances.  It was considered that the parish may wish to continue this after the pandemic, in recognition of those with long term illness, disability or infirmity.  Tim observed that in the medium to long term it would be necessary to consider upgrading the broadband and the hardware to ensure effective live broadcasting, perhaps via YouTube or another platform.  It was agreed to revisit this topic at a future meeting. |  |
| 9. | **Time and date of next meeting**  Pauline thanked everyone for their attendance.  The date and time of the next meeting was confirmed as **Tuesday 18th January at 2.30pm in the Iona Chapel, St Columba’s** |  |

The meeting concluded with the Prayer of the Synod led by Fr. William.