MINUTES OF THE PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETING

Held at St. Theresa’s on 28th June 2022 at 7.00pm

PRESENT: Fr. William, Fr James, Ann McCarthy, Tim Moore, Matthew Petts, Amy O’Donnell, Helen Connor, Sue McCarthy, Lynsey Weightman & Nuala Keegan

The meeting opened with a prayer led by Fr William.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | | **Action** |
| 1. | **Apologies.**  Apologies were received from: Deacon Lawrence, Pauline Rourke, Carol Galvin, Anne Mosquera, Eileen Irwin, and Sue Carr.  Ann advised that Pauline was withdrawing, for a period from active participation in Parish activities, due to illness.  Pastoral Council members recorded their thanks and best wishes to Pauline for a full recovery and Fr William led a prayer. |  |
| 2. | **Resignation**  Nuala advised Pastoral Council members that a letter of resignation had been received from Peter Devine. Due to travel and other commitments Peter was unable to continue as a member of the Pastoral Council. Thanks were recorded to Peter. |  |
| 3. | **Minute Secretary**  Ann reported that Nuala had agreed to continue to act as Pastoral Council Minute Secretary. Previously meetings were minuted by one of the Parish Secretaries, dependant on meeting venue. | Nuala |
| 4. | **Welcome and introductions.**  Ann welcomed Helen Connor to her first Pastoral Council members and introductions were made. |  |
| 5. | **To receive and approve the minutes of the meeting held on 27 April 2022.**  The minutes were approved. |  |
| 6. | **Matters arising from the minutes.**  Amy reported that no general contact had yet been made with the Head of Sixth Form at CHS. She advised that a more specific approach, related to those young people attending mass in the parish, would be more fruitful.  It was agreed that Amy would lead on establishing contact with the relevant young people, with the help of other Pastoral Council members. | Amy to follow up. |
| 7. | **Proposed Deanery meeting regarding the Diocesan Synod Report.**  Fr William reported that he had spoken to Fr Paul Shaw, Acting Dean, on this matter. Fr Paul had indicated his support for the proposal to hold a meeting to bring together representatives from each of the Pastoral Councils in the Deanery to discuss this matter.  Further information was now awaited from Fr Paul.  Ann observed that she had spoken to a number of parishioners from St Werburghs and found that they were equally disappointed with Bishop Mark’s Discernment and the Diocesan Report submitted to the Conference of Bishops of England and Wales. |  |
| 8. | **Draft Parish Development Plan 2002.**  Members received the draft Development Plan and discussions were held regarding the high priority actions identified.  Ann opened the discussion by providing background to the process of assembling the draft plan. Nuala noted that the work of many parishioners and Pastoral Council members, especially Pauline and Ann, had been collated following the three Parish meetings held in May.  The method for determining the degree of priority was explained, based on the number of “votes” given at the Parish meetings.  As the Pastoral Council intended to commit to action on the high priority issues before the end of 2022 Nuala suggested that the meeting may wish to focus on these initially. It was suggested that although all Pastoral Council members would assist, individual members of the Pastoral Council would undertake a lead role in facilitating the implementation of key themes/actions within the Development Plan and report back to future Pastoral Council meetings  Regarding high priority actions the following were noted/agreed:   1. The Children’s Liturgy will restart at 11.00 mass at St Columba’s on 3 July. Dates over the summer to be agreed. Monthly sessions thereafter with greater frequency if additional volunteers can be recruited. Helen offered to assist as a helper. 2. The Youth group – Ann had spoken to Denise Lusk regarding an Autumn restart of this group for young people aged 10 – 14. It had previously taken place at St Columba’s on Monday evenings. A venue share with St Theresa’s would be investigated - issues of safeguarding to be resolved. Amy also offered to be a helper with Denise, if a rota arrangement could be put in place. Matt offered to help with DJ decks. Ann observed that involvement of people in a youth mass had proven to be successful at St Theresa’s previously. Fr William asked that we consult with the young people directly before setting any plans in place 3. The Liturgy Group – Ann had spoken to Mark Traynor who has agreed to coordinate a meeting of the Liturgy group in September to establish plans, including, but not limited to, Christmas and Easter. Deacon Lawrence had indicated that he was happy to act in support but no longer to lead this work. 4. Canvassing families – Lynsey had spoken to several families about what might encourage them to become active members of the parish. A number of ideas had been suggested including a play group. It was noted that a play group was not currently considered to be a project which the parish could pursue for legal, financial, safeguarding and employment reasons. Other ideas included games nights, children’s disco, toys in hall for small children for after mass, a family walk and picnic, coffee and crafts sessions. It was agreed to forward these ideas to the Social Committee for consideration. 5. Improve communications - discussion about the use and management of the two websites. Web editorship and focus on the new website for development, with signposting from the old site. Matt offered to take the lead on this area of work. Nuala will coordinate a meeting with Matt and Anthony Mosquera. Agreed that parish offices would continue to provide and circulate information to support this endeavour. 6. Recruit new Readers and Eucharistic Ministers in order to be more reflective of the parish as a whole. Fr William and Fr James are speaking to parishioners to encourage participation in social gatherings as a precursor to recruitment.   As time permitted discussion followed on some of the medium priority issues.  The following were noted/agreed:   1. Outreach – Sue observed that the compilation of a list of parishioners for visiting or phone contact was complicated due to GDPR. Prior permission from the person was required and anyone visiting officially on behalf of the parish had to complete DBS checks. She reported that several informal friendship visits were taking place and several people were visited by EMoHC, all of whom had DBS clearance. SVP visits were also in place with some individuals /families and with more volunteers/additional funding these visits could be extended. An SVP recruitment drive was required and Sue advised that she would discuss this with Mark Traynor and asked for general assistance. Personal appeals at church, at coffee after mass and at social events could be initiated by any/all PC members. A sponsored walk for the SVP was under active consideration and it was hoped to involve the altar servers   Fr James observed that in relation to all of our activities it was wise to have a group of volunteers in support. This contingency planning would enable activities to operate without all responsibility falling on a single individual.  Nuala hoped that through the use of team rota systems and lead/liaison PC members to facilitate, progress could be made in the areas discussed.  It was agreed that with the additions/amendments ( *Nuala to incorporate)* as discussed above, that the draft Development Plan be formally adopted.  In conclusion, Ann wished formal thanks be recorded to Anne who, although unable to attend, had submitted a document on all aspects of the Development Plan. It was agreed to consider this further in time for the AGM in the Autumn. | Lynsey as liaison PC member  Helen as  liaison PC member  Ann as  liaison PC member  Ann as  liaison PC member  Matt as lead PC member  Nuala  Fr William and Fr James  Sue McC. as liaison PC member. |
| 9. | **Feedback to parishioners**  Some discussion took place on the various methods which might be used to feedback to parishioners.  The following were agreed:   1. Fr William agreed that Pastoral Council members could deliver a short update in place of the homily at all masses on the weekends of 16/17 July and 23/24 July. Tim and Matt would cover masses at St Columba’s on 16/17 July. Helen and Carol (*Nuala to check with her)* would cover masses at St Columba’s on 23/24 July. Ann would discuss with Eileen and Amy to cover masses at St Theresa’s.   Nuala agreed to draft a short ‘script’ and circulate this for everyone’s use.   1. A date be identified for a Pastoral Council AGM and parish social event in the Autumn. | Tim/Matt  Helen/Carol  Ann/Amy/Eileen  Nuala  Ann |
| 10. | **Any Other Business**   1. Nuala reported that a parishioner had stated their belief that in the planning of the Newman Room it had been indicated that this would be available for the sole use of the Parish and not hired to non-parish groups. Nuala had sought advice from Pauline on this point.   Pauline had confirmed that parishioners would continue, as now, to have priority usage but that following the pandemic it was important to utilise all resources available to provide income. Furthermore, that she considered that outreach and opening up the church was an important part of evangelisation and wider community engagement.  Nuala asked Fr William and the Pastoral Council to consider this point and if agreed, to formally record their endorsement of usage by non-parish groups, in line with the above arrangements. This was agreed.   1. Nuala reported a request from Sue C. that approval be given for the drafting of a refurbishment plan for the Hall. This to include rubbish removal, urgent minor works and a larger scale upgrading of the décor and facilities. Fr William stated that this could be prepared but it would be considered by the Finance Committee.   Nuala offered to meet with Sue to identify essential and desirable elements and to draft a paper for the Finance Committee.   1. Ann reported that she had received an enquiry about any plans for a Parish pilgrimage to Walsingham. It was noted that Deacon Lawrence and Eileen Hordley and Gerry Templeton had organised this previously and Ann agreed to discuss this with them. | Nuala & Sue C.  Ann |
| 11.. | **Date of the next meeting.**  Tuesday 6 September at 7.00pm in the Newman Room,  St Columba’s. |  |

The meeting concluded with a reflection from Archbishop Romero, read by Ann, and a prayer led by Fr James.

**Reflection – Archbishop Oscar Romero**

It helps now and then, to step back and take the long view.

The kingdom is not only beyond our efforts, it is even beyond our vision.

We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God’s work.

Nothing we do is complete, which is another way of saying that the kingdom always lies beyond us.

No statement says all that could be said. No prayer fully expresses our faith.

No confession brings perfection, no pastoral visit brings wholeness.

No programme accomplishes the church’s mission.

No set of goals and objectives includes everything.

This is what we are about.

We plant the seeds that will one day grow.

We water the seeds already planted, knowing that we hold future promise.

We lay foundations that will need further development.

We provide yeast that produces effects far beyond our capabilities.

We cannot do everything and there is a sense of liberation in realising that.

This enables us to do something and do it very well.

It may be incomplete, a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord’s grace to

enter and do the rest.

We may never see the end results, but that is the difference between the master

builder and the worker.

We are workers, not master builders, ministers, not messiahs.

We are prophets of a future not our own. Amen.