

*Parish of Saul & Ballee*  
**Minutes from Pastoral Council Meeting**

Date of Meeting: Monday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2015

Time: 7.30pm

Location: Saul Parochial House

**Attendees:** Fr. Alexander, Vivienne McCormick, Peter Mullan, Geraldine McVeigh, Gemma Sloan, Rachel Hamill, Mary Burns, Fionnuala Murray

**Chair:** Vivienne McCormick / **Vice Chair:** Peter Mullan / **Secretary:** Rachel Hamill

**Apologies:** Anne-Marie Hanvey

**1. Opening Prayer** led by Fr. Alexander

**2.** Following the summer recess, it was decided that this meeting should be held to re-examine for all members the definition of the word Pastoral and therefore what is a Parish Pastoral Council, (PPC) our mission statement, our purpose and the aims of our Parish Pastoral Council.

***Definition of the word Pastoral:***

The Council is “Pastoral” i.e. its primary concern is pastoral issues, not administration, buildings, management or finance, which are all the responsibility of other groups.

Pastoral issues are those that impact on the lives of parishioners in the areas of:

- Integration of their faith into everyday life, eg home, work, community
- Nourishment and support of their faith as they try to live as faithful disciples of Jesus
- Outward focus for the development of a vital Christian community, actively engaged in Jesus’ mission of service and influence in the wider world.

***Definition:***

The Parish Pastoral Council is a Parish group that exists to ensure we focus on our vocation as Christians i.e. the continuation of the mission of Jesus Christ in our time and place. At the heart of our work is the question: where and how is God calling us as a Catholic community?

We are called to do three things:

- **REVIEW:** Pastoral Matters-what is happening in our Parish and what else could be happening
- **REFLECT:** we pray, discuss and discern these matters
- **RECOMMEND:** we recommend practical ways forward to enhance the mission of the Parish according to our planned Pastoral Themes and that of the Diocese of Down and Connor.

The PPC is described according to Canon Law as “consultative” to the Parish Priest. It is the Parish Priest who has ultimate responsibility for the overall mission of the Parish. Together we are co-responsible for building a vital Christian community focused on living and promoting the Gospel values of love, justice and peace. This Gospel mandate should prevail among all members of the PPC.

***Our Mission Statement:***

We, the PPC of Saul and Ballee, will serve the whole Parish in the promotion of our Catholic Faith. In doing so, we will promote belonging and community spirit, drawing on the talents of all individuals and groups within the Parish.

We will develop a fully inclusive, caring, Christian Community where all feel welcome as part of a Living Church.

***Our Purpose.***

This is to assist the Parish Priest in his leadership role of planning, organizing, initiating, promoting, coordinating and reviewing evangelism, worship, religious education and various spiritual, pastoral or communal activities within the Parish.

***Our Aims:***

1. Grow in knowledge and awareness of what is already happening in the Parish.
2. Encouraging and supporting the good work of existing groups within the Parish.
3. Searching out and responding to the hopes, ideas, needs and concerns of Parishioners.
4. Evaluating information gathered in order to inform decisions that reflect the values of the Gospel and teachings of the Church.
5. Setting long and short term goals for the Parish, taking into account the Diocesan Pastoral Plan.
6. Providing opportunities for parishioners to grow in their relationship with God and with each other.
7. Developing, implementing and improving parish initiatives that assists parishioners in their continuing efforts to live as Christians in society.

***Prayer:***

Prayer is an essential part of Pastoral Council meetings, and is never omitted from the agenda.

***Meetings:***

The Pastoral Council meets every 4 weeks for a maximum of two hours to ensure that momentum is maintained. Dates of meetings to be fixed in advance to ensure participation by as many Council members as possible.

***Minutes:***

This is a record of the main points of discussions, actions agreed, the names of the people who have agreed to take actions, and the timeframe within which they will take them. Once the Minutes have been adopted by the PPC, copies will be sent to the Parish Secretary and to the website and noticeboards of the Church.

After the above discussions, and before the Closing Prayer Fr. Alexander suggested that we all reflect on what was discussed tonight and whether we can continue our individual commitment towards the monthly meetings and the work of the Parish Pastoral Council.

***Date of next Meeting.***

As Fr. Alexander was away on retreat in October the next meeting was scheduled for Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2015 at 7.30pm.