

Parish of Saul & Ballee

Minutes from Pastoral Council Meeting

Date of meeting: Wednesday 10th January 2017

Time: 7.30pm

Location: Parish Pastoral Centre

Attendees: Fr. Paul Alexander, Vivienne McCormick, Paul Kelly, Paul Fitzsimons, Tommy McCabe and Geraldine McVeigh

Chair: Vivienne McCormick / **Vice Chair:** Post vacant / **Secretary:** Geraldine McVeigh

1. Apologies: Eimear Curran.

2. Opening Prayer led by Vivienne McCormick

The Chairperson welcomed members to the first meeting of 2018 and gave thanks for all that is happening in our Parish at present, to Fr Alexander for his dedication and support to the Parish, to all our different groups, our volunteers and all who work in our Parish who contribute their time and talents to make Saul and Ballee a vibrant community. The Chairperson reminded the Council that the objective of tonight's meeting is to complete some of our outstanding issues.

The Chairperson also advised that Eimear Curran is at present studying for a Masters degree and will therefore be unable to attend meetings this year but will return when her studies are completed.

3. Adoption of Minutes from Previous Meeting – 15th November 2017.

The minutes from the above meeting were circulated to all members via email prior to tonight's meeting. All were in agreement and a proposal was made by Fr Alexander and seconded by Tommy McCabe to adopt the minutes as presented. The minutes were adopted and signed off by the Chairperson, Secretary and Fr. Alexander. A copy will be held on file in the Parochial Office and a copy will be published on the Parish website. The Parish notice boards will also be updated.

- **Action:** Geraldine McVeigh to email minutes to Parish secretary for publication on the Parish website.

- **Action:** Vivienne/Geraldine to update noticeboard in St. Patrick's Church

4. Matters Arising

Retreats for Lay Ministries

A Retreat for Readers and Eucharistic Ministers has been arranged for Saturday 10th February. The day will start at 9.30am and finish at 4.00pm with tea/coffee at 10.00am, lunch at 1.00pm and tea/coffee at 3.00pm. A notice has been in the Bulletin and displayed in each of the Churches. So far 6 have signed up but Vivienne will check numbers with Amanda and let Tobar Mhuire know how many will be attending and will also check if Fr Mel will be available.

- **Action:** Vivienne to let Tobar Mhuire know numbers for retreat
- **Action:** Vivienne to check Fr Mel's availability

Social Gathering for Volunteers

The social gathering has been arranged for Saturday 27th January. The 6.30pm Mass will be offered for all volunteers in the Parish followed by refreshments in the Pastoral Centre. Quotes for catering have been obtained from The Oakley Fayre, Wrap and Roll and Tony Crane. Tony Crane's menu is the most suitable so Vivienne will arrange for him to do the catering. Only 10 volunteers have said they will go but we will go ahead anyway. We had talked about a raffle on the night – we could have one or two prizes. Vivienne has some Prayers of Thanksgiving for Volunteers and we could use these for the Prayers of the Faithful. Fr Alexander will ring the Living Church Office on Friday to invite Jim and Paula.

- **Action:** Vivienne to contact Tony Crane re catering
- **Action:** Fr Alexander to invite Jim and Paula

Memorial Book for the Parish

The Memorial Book was introduced on 1st December. Fr Alexander will include the persons whose names are in the Memorial Book in the Mass of the day. When people see it being used more names will come in. The names of all former Parish Priests in the Parish will be included in the Memorial Book.

- **Action:** No further action required

Parish Newsletter

The December issue went out the weekend of 2nd/3rd December. Vivienne is working on the March issue and will include articles on Lourdes and Easter with information on WMOF and other relevant matters

- **Action:** March issue will be sent out to members asap.

Family Prayer Ministry

The advent Prayers were sent out on 22nd November. The family Mass on 16th December was well attended with good feedback. The schools and clubs were well represented. Only 17 people attended for refreshments in the Pastoral Centre afterwards which was disappointing.

The winners of the Christmas Schools competition were:

St Patrick's Saul

P1-4. 1st Leah McMullan (P3) 2nd Amelia Stratton (P1)
 P5-7. 1st Cora Bell (P7) 2nd Harry Gough (P6)

St Joseph's Ballycruttle

P1-3 1st Maisie Caldwell (P3) 2nd Oscar Keown (P2)
 P4-7 1st Abby Cochrane (P6) 2nd Declan Murray (P6)

The standard of entries for the competition was very high and it was suggested we could perhaps put the entries into a folder and present it to the school or we could scan the pictures and put them on Facebook but there would be the child protection issue with Facebook. Vivienne will speak to the Principal about what to do with the pictures.

It was suggested that for Easter, instead of the usual competition, we could put together a chocolate hamper and raffle it for school funds. Following discussion it was thought this would conflict with the schools fundraising for Trocaire. It was decided we should have the competition as usual and we could perhaps do a hamper later in the year. Fr Alexander suggested we ask the older children to draw pictures of Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday

- **Action:** Vivienne to speak to school Principal re competition entries
- **Action:** Easter competition to be arranged.

Christmas Masses

The Christmas Masses were very well attended. The 9.00pm Vigil Mass in Saul was packed, the 11.00pm in Carlin was not so busy and Ballycruttle on Christmas morning was not full. Fr Alexander was very pleased with the attendance overall.

- **Action:** No further action required

Review of Anniversary Masses

The number of requests for anniversary Masses is causing problems. A priest can only take one offering for one Mass and a Mass must be offered for the Parish each Sunday – this is an obligation, so we need to review the arrangement for anniversary Masses. Fr Alexander will take advice and come back on it.

- **Action:** To go on Agenda for next meeting

WMOF 2018

A notice is running for the final Mass at which the Pope is expected to attend. It is expected he will come for the weekend and have a couple of venues. The final Mass will be in the RDS, not Phoenix Park. The Prayer for Families is now said at most of the Masses. Over 1000 copies of the prayer were issued and it is hoped families will continue

to say the prayer afterwards. The icon was given out at the Christmas Masses. Chris is to speak to the schools about the First Communion Cube. There are two training sessions in Downpatrick on 24th January and 7th February, on taking the six week course, The Joy of Love, during Lent. Strangford and Ardglass have said they would attend a course here. We have the most suitable Centre. It was suggested they be held on a Friday. For the Seasonal initiative The Blessing of homes with Easter water - Fr Alexander will speak to CBC about the cost of putting the parish name on the Holy Water bottles he proposes to buy.

- **Action:** Chris to advise schools about Amoris Cube for First Communion
- **Action:** Fr Alexander to cost personalised Holy Water bottles

5. Review of 2017 Pastoral Plan

We are on track for most of our Pastoral Plan.

Open and Welcoming Church –

- The Pastoral Centre is being used quite well but we need to get more people involved

Faith Development –

- We had the Advent talks and they were very successful. The second and third talks were well attended. The Knights of Columbanus are also doing talks in Lent.
- The Memorial Book is up and running.
- We will hopefully get the November Mass for the deceased set up for next year – it could be held on a Friday evening. We can set up a list to send personal invites to the families of deceased parishioners during the year– we could have candles with the name of the deceased to be lit by families.
- To involve the First Communion and Confirmation classes in Eucharistic Adoration – the Principal has said he will bring the children over.
- We have had problems getting facilitators for the Called and Gifted course when we wanted them.
- Beloved Disciples Course – Fr Alexander would hope to run this course. It is being rolled out in the Spring over the diocese – it could be held on a Wednesday morning.
- A retreat for Readers and Eucharistic Ministers has been arranged.

Lay Participation

- Eucharistic Adoration, Morning Prayer and the Padre Pio Group are all going well.
- Family Prayers are sent out to families in the Family Prayer Ministry

Communication

- We have sent out information sheets for items when we do not have space in the Bulletin.
- We need to make Parish Groups aware of communication channels.
- Most information goes through the Parish Secretary who can put it on Facebook or in the Bulletin. We need to have the website updated.

We are doing reasonably well with our Pastoral Plan and are ahead in a lot of areas in our Parish.

- **Action:** Vivienne will prepare Annual Report to the Bishop (In Diary for March)

6. Any Other Business

Carol Service

The Carol Service was a great success and the Pastoral Centre was well attended afterwards. There are a few things Fr Alexander would like included in future Carol Services if it can be arranged – we could perhaps end with a medley of Christmas songs.

- **Action:** No further action required

Confirmation

Confirmation date has been arranged for 3rd May. Fr Alexander advised that in each Pastoral Area the Bishop will do one third of Confirmations each year – the others will be done by the VF or Deputy VF.

- **Action:** No further action required

Pastoral Community Forum Update

A commissioning service for members of the Pastoral Community Forum was held on 3rd December. The last meeting of Downpatrick Community Forum was facilitated by Jim Deeds and the next meeting has been arranged for 13th February. Fr Murray will be President of the DCF but he will not be able to run the meetings. The Forum can only move forward when officeholders are in place – a lay person has to be appointed as Chairperson and the posts of secretary, Communications Officer and Prayer Leader have to be filled. Three Parishes, Loughinisland, Saintfield and Drumaroad, are not represented at the Forum. Parishes need to work together and people have to realise the problems ahead – it was difficult when we changed the Masses in the Parish but people have got used to it - Permanent Deacons are being ordained in October having completed a four year course – they will be able to do Baptisms, Funerals and Weddings.

Action: Vivienne will keep us updated.

7. Date of next meeting/Prayer Leader

The date of the next meeting will be: Wednesday 7th February. Prayer will be led by Tommy McCabe.

8. Closing Prayer

Meeting concluded with closing prayer