

Parish of Saul & Ballee

Minutes from Pastoral Council Meeting

Date of meeting: Tuesday 6th March 2018

Time: 7.00pm

Location: Parish Pastoral Centre

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

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

1. Opening Prayer led by Paul Kelly

The Chairperson welcomed members to the meeting. The objectives of tonight's meeting are to complete some of our outstanding issues, and discuss our Pastoral Plan for 2018-2019

2. Adoption of Minutes from Previous Meeting – 6th February 2018.

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 Paul Kelly 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

3. Matters Arising

Retreat for Lay Ministries

The Retreat for Readers and Eucharistic Ministers was held on Saturday, 10th February. 11 people attended the retreat which was facilitated by Fr Mel. It was a challenging day but feedback was good. Vivienne has e-mailed thanks to Tobar Mhuire.

Retreat for the Adoration and Morning Prayer Groups – following discussion it was felt that if this retreat were to be open to all who attend Adoration it would be necessary to make a charge to cover the cost. This will be considered further and hopefully we can

arrange something after the summer. Fr Alexander also wishes to arrange a retreat for the Pastoral Council.

- **Action:** Retreats for Lay Ministries to go in Diary for September

Parish Newsletter

The March Newsletter is ready to print – there was difficulty with the photographs of the function for volunteers so they have had to be removed. The June issue will have an article on Medjugorje, the Pastoral Plan and an article on the Pastoral Community Forum. Hopefully this will be ready for the May meeting to give Amanda time to print it, as the office is extremely busy.

- **Action:** March Newsletter to go out when printed
- **Action:** Vivienne preparing draft of June Newsletter.(In Diary)

Family Prayer Ministry/Schools Competition

Lenten Prayers went out before half-term and Vivienne will get the Easter prayers sent out before the Easter holidays.

Easter Competition:- Vivienne has prepared a competition for the schools and will get it out to the schools by 12th March. There are separate posters for P1-2, P3-4 and P5-7. There will be a prize of an Easter Egg for the winners in each section and the prizes will go out before the schools close for Easter.

- **Action:** Vivienne to send Easter Prayers to schools
- **Action:** Vivienne to send Easter competition to schools

WMOF 2018 – Blessing of Homes

A notice will go in the Bulletin on Palm Sunday about the availability of bottles of Holy Water for the blessing of homes at Easter. Fr Alexander will get a price for the Holy Water bottles and decide how many to order.

- **Action:** Vivienne to send Bulletin notice to Amanda
- **Action:** Fr Alexander to order bottles for Holy Water

Bishop's/Parishioners Report

Our Constitution requires us to do an annual report to the Bishop and advise parishioners what is happening in the Parish and Vivienne has prepared these reports. The picture on the front of the reports is one the schools prepared for Catholic Schools Week. The Report to the Bishop has to be signed by Fr Alexander. The report to Parishioners will be available on the website and if anyone requires a copy it can be obtained from the Parish Office.

- **Action:** Report to Bishop to be signed and sent out.
- **Action:** Parishioners Reports to go on website.

4. Pastoral Plan for 2018

Following discussion at our last meeting Vivienne prepared a draft Pastoral Plan under the 5 Diocesan themes of Open/Welcoming Church, Lay Participation, Faith and Worship, Communication and Clergy.

Open and Welcoming Church

- **Encourage more young people to become altar servers:** Numbers have dropped – servers in Ballycruttle and Carlin turn up regularly but numbers in Saul have dropped – Fr Alexander has asked a few children – altar servers have to be P5 or upwards.
- **Parish Fun Day:** We will keep this on the Pastoral Plan and keep it under review – it would be weather dependant – it was suggested we could have a marquee but following discussion and the need for planning permission etc it would not be worth the amount of work involved. Fr Alexander had a call from the Living Church Office and they are to have a meeting about Saul Sunday – they would like to tie Saul Sunday in with WMOF – this suggestion has come from the Pastoral Community Forum.
- **Welcoming Committee:** It was thought this would not work in the Parish

Lay Participation

- **WMOF:** it has yet to be confirmed that the Pope is coming but it is expected he will. It has yet to be confirmed that the final Mass will be in Phoenix Park but we will leave this item in our Pastoral Plan. The Joy of Love course had to be cancelled because the videos did not work – it would have been a good programme to run but it has not been possible. One idea suggested was that on the Sunday before Christmas families could be asked to bring the infant Jesus from their Crib to the Church to be blessed – they could then take it home, wrap it up and it could be the first present opened on Christmas morning – Fr Alexander would like to do this annually.
- **Encourage/support existing initiatives:-** The numbers are small and we need to keep trying to develop these.
- **Develop Ministry of Praise:** We need to get someone to run it – numbers are small but Fr Alexander is trying to get new members. Each month Vivienne sends out prayers and a birthday card needs to be sent out to members.
- **Encourage/Support Family Prayer Ministry:** At present we have 61 families - we will look at it in September when we have the new intake in the schools to try to get new members.
- **New Readers/Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion:** We need new readers and Ministers of the Eucharist. We need to look for younger people – we could have an evening to train them – Fr Alexander has asked a number of people there are people at Mass who should be able to do the Readings and we need to

try to get them involved – Readers should be able to read at whichever Church they go to. We will keep this in the Pastoral Plan.

Faith & Worship

- **Retreats:** Arrange retreats for Morning Prayer Group/Adoration Group/Adorers/PPC
- **Lenten Talks:** We are too late for this now because of the confusion about the videos for the Joy of Love course.
- **Advent Talks:** We will keep this in.
- **November Mass for deceased:** We would include all who have died since mid-October until the following October and have a candle with each name on it.
- **Called and Gifted Course:** We had problems with facilities but will try to get it this autumn.
- **Baptism Course:** Fr Alexander suggested getting Catechists trained who could run this course. They could also train children for First Confession, Holy Communion and Confirmation – we will think about this – there is a one year or a three year course – we would be prepared when preparation for the sacraments is taken out of the schools – this would put the commitment on parents rather than being left with the teachers – Fr Alexander will find out details about training catechists – we have to look to the future and should prepare now.
- **Beloved Disciples Course:** This is to be rolled out through the Diocese.
- **Be it Done Unto Me Course:** we will keep this on.
- **Mass for young people at exam time:** We will keep this on.

Communication

- **Maintain close links with Parish Schools** – we do this through Family Prayer Ministry and competitions at Christmas and Easter.
- **Update website**
- **Increase usage of Facebook page**
- **Pastoral Community: Keep Parish updated**

Clergy

- Continue to help and support Fr Alexander
- Liaise with PCF where necessary

- **Action:** To pray/discern about the above info and be able to sign off on our 2018-2019 Pastoral Plan at our next meeting.

5. Any Other Business

Pastoral Community Forum Update

At a meeting of the PCF on 13th February it was agreed to pass running of meetings to the lay representatives. A meeting of the Chair, Secretary, Prayer Leader and Communications Officer will be held on 10th April to draw up an Agenda prior to the next full PCF Meeting on 24th April. Vivienne has contacted the Living Church Office and obtained the norms for the PCF which had already been sent out. Vivienne has a list of the aims and areas of work led by the 5 Diocesan themes and will work through them. One area they need to look at is a contingency plan in the event of a priest being off ill. There are 11 Masses in the area between 5.30pm and 7.30pm on Saturday and 18 on a Sunday. Saul and Strangford both have a Mass at 6.30pm on Saturday – one could be at an earlier time and the other later and the priest in either parish could then do both Masses – the 11.00am Mass in both parishes could be changed to enable one priest to say both Masses. There is one priest being ordained for the Diocese on 17th June. Fr Alexander felt at the last meeting the Forum was beginning to move on. It was felt this was the best system at the moment for the Diocese. Vivienne will send the Agenda to Fr Murray before sending it out to all members. The Officers posts will change for the next meeting to enable everyone to get to know each other.

Action: Vivienne will keep us updated.

6. Date of next meeting/Prayer Leader

The date of the next meeting will be: **Tuesday 17th April 2018 at 7.00pm.** Prayer will be led by Paul Fitzsimons.

7. Closing Prayer

- Meeting concluded with closing prayer.