

Parish of Saul & Ballee

Minutes from Pastoral Council Meeting

Date of meeting: **Monday 2nd October 2022**

Time: 7.00pm

Location: Parish Pastoral Centre

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

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

1. Apologies: Jackie Breen and Paul Fitzsimons

2. Opening Prayer led by Paul Kelly

The Chairperson welcomed members to the first meeting in almost a year and advised that Jackie was on retreat – he has been a great help to Fr. Alexander as has been Thomas the seminarian.

3. Adoption of Minutes from Previous Meeting – 23rd November 2021

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 Paul Kelly 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.

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

- **Action:** Copy minutes to go on Church noticeboard

4. Matters Arising

- **Crib Donations**

Donations left at the Crib were donated to the Legion of Mary hostels for the homeless in Belfast, Morning Star and Regina Coeli and delivered by Fr. Alexander and Jackie. The hostels were very

pleased with the amount of donations received from the Parish. There had been a great response from Parishioners to the request for donations of tea, coffee, biscuits etc and small gifts. We have to decide what to do this year.

- **Action:** Decision to be made on Charity to support at Christmas.

- **Christmas Mass Intention Cards**

The Christmas Mass Intention cards sold well last year. We ordered 500 last year and will get a different design this year so there will be a choice of two different cards available We would hope to hold a Christmas Raffle again this year.

- **Action:** New design of Christmas Intention Card to be ordered

- **Update on the Universal Synodal Process**

A booklet has now been published following a meeting of the Dioceses in Ireland and sent to Rome where the Synod will be held 2023. This is available on the diocesan website. Some of the concerns raised by the Dioceses were: The need to hand on the faith, the decline in vocations and the need for greater transparency.

- **Action:** No action required.

- **Ministries of the Word and Holy Communion**

Some people involved in these Ministries have stopped. Fr. Alexander is pleased with the number of young people coming to Mass and we have to try to involve them. Fr. Alexander will ask people about becoming readers and Ministers of the Eucharist and will ask Catherine Kelly to train some new Readers. The collectors are back to normal in Saul but there are none in Ballycruttle.

- **Action:** Fr. Alexander to ask people to become Readers and Ministers of the Eucharist

Fr. Alexander to ask Catherine Kelly to train Readers

5. Diocesan Liturgy Commission

A one day seminar 'Liturgy after Covid – Approaches to Liturgy in light of our experience of the Pandemic' is being held on Saturday 8th October in St Brigid's Parish Hall, Derryvolgie Avenue, Belfast. Anyone interested should contact Malachy McKeever, email: liturgy@downandconnor.org Vivienne will e-mail him requesting any available literature.

- **Action:** Vivienne to e-mail Malachy McKeever for any available literature.

6. Diocesan Pathway Meetings

These meetings were organised in July but have been postponed until October. They will now take place in Castlewellan on 17th October, Ballymena on 18th October and Belfast on 19th October – each session will run from 7pm to 9pm. Each Parish has been asked to invite two lay people to attend the meeting and anyone attending has to register beforehand. Fr. Alexander and Jackie will attend the meeting in Castlewellan. The Chairs of Pastoral Councils and Finance Committees are also invited.

- **Action:** No action required

7. Any other business

Mass attendance

- The numbers coming to Mass in Saul are about back to normal but numbers have not come back the same in Ballycruttle and Carlin. The collection figures are staying up well, but they are down – we need to get the counters back again but with the late Mass now being at 12 noon the time of the count may need to be changed.

- **Action:** Fr. Alexander to get counters back.

Weekly Bulletin

- The Bulletin is now available in PDF to print ourselves but Fr. Alexander advised they are awaiting a price from a printing firm to try to keep the costs down.

- **Action:** No action required

Parish Centre

- We have one year left before we have to remove the mobile currently being used as a Pastoral Centre. The cost of a permanent building was estimated at £150,000 to £170,000 but building costs have doubled recently. The Parish Centre is not being used as much as we had hoped and would not justify the cost. Fr. Alexander said we have about £140,000 funding in the Parish but the boilers in Ballycruttle and Carlin both need replaced and the inside of St Patrick's Church needs painted again. Fr. Alexander extended his thanks to the fund-raising Committee who have worked hard to raise funds for the Parish. A new boiler has recently been installed in Saul and the heating in the Church is now on. The boiler in the current Pastoral Centre could go into Carlin. As an alternative Fr Alexander is considering whether the front room in the parochial house, and the room behind it could be converted to give a suitable space - the window out to the back garden could be made a doorway to give disabled access - this would only require building control and not planning

permission. It would also be necessary to close off the upstairs in the parochial House. It is estimated this would cost approximately £28,000 and would leave some money for other work that needs done in the three Churches in the Parish. It is time to put out the contract for grounds maintenance again. There is a Parish in Belfast interested in the Pastoral Centre – they would need to pay the cost to move it. It has been good in that we now understand how much we need it. St Matthew's are keen to get the mobile.

- **Action:** No action required

Relics of St. Pio

- To mark the 20th anniversary of Padre Pio being declared a Saint the Relics of St. Pio are coming to the Diocese in November. The relics can be venerated in the following Churches:

St Peter's Cathedral, Belfast from 6th to 8th November

All Saints Church, Ballymena from 8th to 10th November

St Patrick's Church, Downpatrick from 10th to 11th November

- **Action:** No action required

Liturgical Music Seminar

- This will be held in St. Patrick's Church, Downpatrick on 25th October at 7.30pm. Choirs, cantors and musicians are invited to attend – the main theme will be music for Church weddings. Fr. Alexander requires hymns at all ceremonies.

- **Action:** No action required.

Rosary Rally

- On Sunday 9th October a Rosary Rally will be held at Grottos and Churches throughout the country to pray for Faith and Life in Ireland.

- **Action:** No action required

St. Joseph's PS Ballycruttle

- Ballycruttle school is now halfway through a two year process – there are 12 pupils this year. There are 3 teachers and two classroom assistants – there are no teaching posts for teachers being made redundant. There are currently 175 pupils in St Patrick's PS Saul.

- **Action:** No action required

8. Date of next meeting/Prayer Leader

The date of the next meeting will be **Monday 7th November at 7.00pm. Prayer Leader will be Tommy McCabe.**

9. Closing Prayer: Meeting concluded with closing prayer.