

Parish of Saul & Ballee

Minutes from Pastoral Council Meeting

Date of meeting: **Monday 7th November 2022**

Time: 7.00pm

Location: Parish Pastoral Centre

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

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

1. Opening Prayer led by Tommy McCabe

The Chairperson welcomed members to the meeting.

2. Adoption of Minutes from previous Meeting – 3rd October 2022

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.

3. Matters Arising

- **Diocesan Liturgy Commission**

A seminar was held on 8th October covering Liturgy after Covid. There is no information available yet, but Vivienne will contact Malachy McKeever to request any available literature.

- **Action:** Vivienne to contact Malachy McKeever for available information.

- **Diocesan Pathway Meetings**

Fr. Alexander attended the meeting on 17th October. They are talking about ‘families of Parishes’ the Downpatrick area would include Downpatrick, Dunsford and Ardglass, Bright, Saul and Ballee and Kilclief. Crossgar, Saintfield and Carryduff will go together. There are 16 Churches in this area. There have been 242 Baptisms and 167 funerals. Downpatrick had 74 funerals, Dunsford had 30 and we had 31. In some parts of Belfast, they are having to look at different ways to approach funerals, they are having to look at the difficulties for priests and people requiring a Catholic funeral. The Mass is very relevant at funerals but if they are not practicing a Deacon could do a funeral service. The vast majority of baptised Catholics no longer attend Church. We need to look at the numbers attending Masses, there was a big number last Sunday and at the vigil Mass. There will be another meeting to move to the next stage. It is thought some Deacons could do administration in the Parishes and secretaries will be involved in this too. Last week the Diocese lost four Priests. The Bishop spoke well and put a good perspective on it – there are changes ahead. He talked of pastoral care of priests who have a heavy workload and the need to support Priests.

- **Action:** No further action required

- **Relics of St Padre Pio**

To mark the 20th anniversary of Padre Pio being declared a Saint the Relics of St. Pio are coming to the Diocese this month. 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.

- **November Mass for the deceased**

Mass for those who have died in the Parish from 1st November 2021 to 31st October 2022 will be held at 7.00pm on 23rd November. Families of the deceased will be invited to attend, and a candle will be lit by a representative of each family – there should be a good attendance. Downpatrick is also having a Mass for the deceased and there is also one in Newcastle.

- **Action:** No further action required.

4. Christmas in the Parish.

A date has to be arranged for the Carol Service. Fr. Alexander proposed having a Vigil Mass at 6.00pm and 8.00pm, or at 7.00pm and 9.00pm in Ballycruttle and Saul respectively but was inclined towards 6.00pm and 8.00pm. On Christmas morning there will be Mass in Saul at 9.30am

and in St. Tassagh's at 11.00am. There will be extra Confessions during the week before Christmas.

Last year the response to the Christmas appeal for the hostels in Belfast was very good – we have to decide whether to do the same this year or to choose another charity. Jackie contacted the Deacon who works with the hostels and following discussion it was agreed that we again ask for donations of tea, coffee, sugar and biscuits and small gifts for the hostels for the homeless, Morning Star and Regina Coeli, run by the Legion of Mary in Belfast. It was hoped that Rev. Gregory McGuigan who works with the homeless would come to make a personal appeal for donations, but he is fully booked. He will come to the Parish after Christmas to thank parishioners for their donations.

This year we have a choice of two Christmas Mass intention cards available. A Christmas raffle has been arranged and tickets are now on sale – there will be a Christmas hamper and other prizes.

We will leave the schools competition until Easter.

- **Action:** Christmas Mass times to go in the Bulletin
- **Action:** Appeal for donations to go in Bulletin

5. Any other business

Beloved Disciples Course

- This course has now started and was very well attended. There are booklets available for the course.
- **Action:** No action required

Book Exchange

- The Pastoral Centre is open Monday to Friday from 10.00am to 12.00 noon for anyone wishing to exchange a book
- **Action:** No action required

Eucharistic Ministry

- A course for Eucharistic Ministers will start in Downpatrick tomorrow evening and is open to anyone who wishes to go.
- **Action:** No action required

Mass Leaflet

- Shanway Press will now print the Mass leaflets.

- **Action:** No action required

Church Sacristan

- Fr. Alexander feels there is a need for a sacristan in the Parish. If there is no Priest a sacristan could open up for a visiting Priest and ensure supplies are available for the Priest saying Masses. A sacristan would need to be trained on how to set up the altar and the books and vestments. There will come a time when there will be no Priest in the Parish.

- **Action:** Fr. Alexander to arrange engaging a sacristan.

6. Date of next meeting/Prayer Leader

The date of the next meeting will be **Monday 9th January at 7.00pm. Prayer Leader will be Jackie Breen.**

7. Closing Prayer: Meeting concluded with a closing prayer.