

## St. Mary's Parish Council

### Meeting on Monday 6 November 2023

**Present:** Fr. John McGinley  
Deacon Andrew Davis  
Honor Hania  
Kathleen Halpin  
Marie Brown  
Marian Boyce  
Anne Heron  
Angela McLellan  
David Killin

#### 1) Welcome and apologies for absence

Honor welcomed everyone to the meeting and led us in an opening prayer

Jacqui Harkin sends apology for absence.

David Killin was present at the meeting to update us on the progress of the Deanery Council meetings.

#### 2) Minutes of last meeting

Minutes of meeting on Tuesday 24 January 2023 approved by Honor Hania and seconded by Fr McGinley

3) David Killin gave a presentation to the council members to update on the progress of St Columba Deanery Council. This council have formed two groups dealing with 1) Evangelisation and 2) Resources. David is in group 1 and Fr McGinley is in group 2.

David outlined the ideas being considered re Evangelisation. Areas discussed include launching a programme through social media. Should we employ a professional person to help start the process? This would obviously incur financial commitment from each parish with the archdiocese agreeing to fund 50% of the cost. Cost for the deanery could be £5,000. Perhaps there is someone in our deanery who would be willing to develop this idea and take it forward on a part time basis.

Another measure could be Hope Kitchen involving Firecloud. Individuals could share their views on their faith and visit parishes to present a social evening of discussion and music.

Fr McGinley is involved in the group dealing with resources i.e. Church buildings, number of priests etc. Three priests in the deanery are due to retire within the next year. What preparation can be made for this eventuality? Parishes may be formed into "Pastoral Areas" consisting of 4/5 parishes.

How will we deal with preparation of people for the Sacraments? Laity will need to become more involved. Teams of Catechists will be required to be trained to

undertake this and other duties.

Both sub groups are to report back to the Archbishop by end of November 2023.

#### **4)Membership of the Parish Pastoral Council**

We probably require another three or four members to participate. Members can suggest their nominations to Fr McGinley.

#### **5) Communication**

Church website is very good but probably not visited as much as Facebook page which also shows events happening in the wider community.

Bulletin is sent to website and Facebook page each week and is read by people in the parish and elsewhere. Details of weekly collections will be included.

Fr McGinley advised that three pictures will be displayed in the porch but notices will be kept to a minimum of those required ie Safeguarding and Insurance and the like.

New hymn stand has been ordered. We also discussed provision of seating in event of someone taking unwell whilst in the church. Fr McGinley advised that porch should be kept clear for Health and Safety regulations.

Deacon Andrew suggested that perhaps an electronic noticeboard could be used and this should be considered further.

WIFI will be extended to cover the hall and this will provide more facilities for meetings, conferences and perhaps Childrens' Liturgy.

Fr McGinley advised the importance of Reception and Vigil of deceased on the evening before funeral. Traditionally this was the usual practice in our parish but has become less common since the pandemic. Perhaps we could offer some hospitality to bereaved families in an attempt to encourage non practising Catholics and others to participate more in the life of the parish.

#### **6)Future Plans**

General discussion covered meetings for those taking part in various ministries within the parish. Also trips to Scalan, Carfin or Schoenstatt were discussed and can be further considered in the future.

Stephen Callaghan of AGAP has offered to bring one of his events to the parish and Fr McGinley will confirm that this can go ahead.

#### **7)AOCB**

Anne Heron confirmed that all requirements are up to date at present.

Honor led us in the closing prayer.