

St. Joseph and St. Patrick's Wemyss Bay.

Parish Pastoral Council Away Day

Sunday 16th August 2015

Present: Father Berry, Brian Blacklaw (Chair), Gillian Hall (Minute), Louise Redmond, Marie O'Hagan, Marcus Barry, Dora Beeteson, John Wilson, Andrew McShane, Isobel Quinn, Owen Quinn, Michael Di Paola and Julia Gibson

Apologies: Joan Riddell. Mark Galvin and Hazel Mitchell

1. WELCOME

Brian welcomed everyone to our 2015 Away Day at The Little Sisters of the Poor, Greenock.

2. REFLECTION AND PRAYER

Reflection from Father Berry was followed by a passage from Luke Chapter 15:1-10 read by Dora.

3. RETAINING AND RE-ENERGISING THE YOUTH

Brian introduced our first speaker Christine Riddoch and the topic was how to re-energise and re-engage the youth of the Parish. Christine shared her wealth of experience in this matter and provided us with direction and many ideas to both engage us in discussion and provide guidance in various ways forward should we wish to take the discussion to the next level. Suggestions on how to proceed and matters for consideration.

- **Age Group** - Christine's events with Diocesan Youth targeted ages 12-25. Is this the age group we would target or should it be slightly older?
- **How often should events be held** - ie weekly, fortnightly or monthly?
- **Activities** - In Christine's experience keeping the sessions light with fun, interactive activities, ice breaker type games and music would engage the participants. The level of faith based input can be determined as the event planning progresses.

For events aimed at the older youth members of the Parish then pub based activities and use of social media are seen to be the way forward. Feedback is vital and activities should be reviewed to gauge their success and encourage suggestions for future events/activities.

- **Advertising** - There are other Parishes within our Diocese who run successful Youth Clubs and Youth Events. Two examples were St Aiden's in Johnstone and St John's in Port Glasgow. We could approach these Parishes for advice and guidance to allow us to move forward with our plans. Christine also offered to provide advice and 'hands on' assistance in the future.

A link up with our local secondary school, specifically for this purpose, is vital to help promote any proposed activities to ensure they are well advertised and well attended.

This subject is a 'work in progress' and will be discussed again at future meetings as we strive to help the youth of our Parish "find their space" and hopefully provide a positive guide for them in their faith journey.

Brian thanked Christine for her interesting and very informative presentation.

4. Meeting was adjourned for lunch

5. **The Diocesan Synod**

Monsignor Dennis Carlin was introduced as our second guest speaker to provide us with more information on the Diocesan Synod and an insight into the work that lies ahead.

Monsignor Carlin explained that there has not been a Diocesan Synod since 1947 and its purpose is to deliberate, discuss and forward its recommendations to the Bishop. The Bishop then forwards his conclusions to the Metropolitan and Holy See.

Our Diocesan Synod begins with Mass in the Cathedral after Easter. It is proposed that the five working sessions will be held on alternate Saturdays throughout May and June, covering a ten week period. The venue is still to be decided but the possibility of a local secondary school has been discussed.

There will be up to 200 people involved which includes all Priests, Deacons, representatives from Parish Groups, and organisations eg. SVDP, Legion Of Mary etc. The sessions will contain prayer, input, group discussions, feedback and response. Input from experts in this field ie. Facilitators is being discussed to ensure the workshops run smoothly and efficiently.

The two topics for the Diocesan Synod are the Lay Faithful and New **Evangelisation**.

Lay Faithful – This is anyone involved in the church who is not ordained, therefore they make up the majority. It is felt that the Lay Faithful are not represented at present within the Councils of the Church. If the Lay Faithful are represented their understanding and input will lead to better promotion of the Church and this will allow us to rethink how we run our Parishes.

New **Evangelisation** – Spreading the gospel and the good news. This is something we have always done but need to do better. The purpose is to find a way to reach out, show the way and re-engage people back to our church. We can update our evangelising skills eg. using social media to help spread the word and show the importance of church values.

There are three key documents to aid the Synod and these are:

Apostolicam Actuositatem (Vatican II)

Christifideles Laici (St John Paul II)

Evangelii Gaudium (Pope Francis)

There will be an admin person appointed to assist with our input to the Synod at Parish level and Brian Blacklaw will be our Parish representative.

Monsignor Carlin answered questions from the meeting and it was agreed that there is much work ahead to allow the Synod to be well prepared, organised, focused and ready to move forward to help ensure its success. Brian thanked Monsignor Carlin for his entertaining, informative and valuable addition to our Away Day.

6. REVIEW

- **Foodbank** - This is an ongoing and successful appeal and the rota for delivering the Parish collections is still in place. It was agreed that a note would be put in the newsletter as a reminder that donations to the foodbank appeal are still most welcome.
- **Jesse Tree**- The Jesse Tree appeal will go ahead this year as usual. Sister Roseann from the Sisters of the Gospel of Life has agreed to come to the Parish to explain their work and how the Jesse Tree donations are put to use. Owen and Isobel will liaise with Sister Roseann with a view to organising the visit around Advent time.
- **Backpacks** - Due to the success of the Backpack appeal it was discussed whether to repeat the same appeal next year or to make this a bi-annual event. It was felt possibly every two years would be preferable but the possibility of doing a similar appeal next year will be discussed at future meetings.
- **Website** - Brian advised that all rotas are now posted on the website with the exception of the tea rota and the rota for Eucharistic Ministers. It is now possible to have a newsletter sent directly to your email address by clicking the link on the website and providing your email address. A possible glitch on the website was highlighted when trying to access photographs using an Ipad device. Brian will ask Kenneth to look it this.
- **Krakow** - The proposed Parish trip to Krakow and the decision to postpone the trip was discussed. It was felt that possibly a different destination or organising at a time outwith school holidays could possibly generate more interest and this will be discussed again in the future.
- **Carfin** - A parish visit to Carfin as part of a Diocesan group or purely as a Parish group was thought to be something that would be popular and therefore will be, again a topic for discussion at future meetings.
- **Bidding Prayers** - The issue of making bidding prayers more relevant by changing the content and delivery was again discussed. It was agreed that the Liturgy Committee would discuss this and hopefully draw up a proposal to change the format of the bidding prayers.

7. GOALS FOR THIS YEAR

- **Synod** - As explained by Monsignor Carlin it will be a very busy time and there is much work ahead. We will receive updates on the preparations as and when they are available.
- **Our Lady of Paisley Icon** - This devotion will visit our Parish in February 2016. There are guidelines on how we celebrate the arrival and departure of the devotion but the Parish decides on how they wish to mark the occasion in between these times.

- **Development Team** - As yet the report from the team is not forthcoming. The team will meet again in September.
- **Visiting Group** - Fr Berry has this matter in hand. There are 2-3 volunteers involved and PVG clearance is required. It was noted that Kevin Beaumont has resigned from the PPC as he has left the Parish. Brian will organise a letter of thanks to acknowledge Kevin's effort and commitment to the Council in the past. Marie suggested a Mass Bouquet and this will be investigated.
- **Our Lady Undoer of Knots** - Brian advised that this devotion is being celebrated at St Johns in Barrhead every Tuesday evening for the next six weeks. He suggested the devotion could be celebrated in our Parish 28/9/2015 (The feast day of Our Lady Undoer of Knots) until 06/10/2015. As the Liturgy Committee are not meeting prior to these dates Brian will discuss it with Fr Berry.

8. AOCB

- Marie has been asked to request that the prayers during Mass can be slowed down to ensure that everyone can take part. This matter will be addressed with Fr Berry.
- Signage - Since the last meeting the request for signage for the Parish grounds was approved by the Finance Committee and will be organised in the near future.
- Future Meeting Dates - The date of the AGM was changed from its proposed date of 22/10/2015 to Thursday 01/10/2015. As previously mentioned, Kevin has resigned from the committee. Michael, Julia and Brian are all up for re-election at this meeting. Marie advised that she would be happy to offer her resignation from the committee.

The Away Day meeting was closed and date of next meeting will be the AGM at 7pm on Thursday 1st October 2015.