

Meeting: St. Joseph's Parish Pastoral Council
Date: Monday, 22nd January 2024
Location: St. Joseph's Church Hall

Present:

Sr Mary Mabel Chukwu (MC)	Desmond Cunningham (DC)
Eileen Cunningham (EC)	Amélie Davidson (AD) <i>Vice-Chair</i>
Sally Hamill (SH)	Laura Hand (LH)
Janice Lennon (JL)	Hugh Matthews (HM)
Margaret McGrath (MM)	Fr Stephen McGrattan (SM) <i>Parish Priest</i>
George McIntyre (GM) <i>Secretary</i>	Paul Nicholson (PN) <i>Chair</i>
Sr Juliet Obiorah (JO)	Fr Kevin Rennie (KR) <i>Assistant Priest</i>

Apologies: Ruairidh Heron (RH), Sr Mary Rose Maduka (MRM), Judith Wilson (JW).

Item	Notes	Action
1.	<p>Welcome, Opening Prayer and Sederunt:</p> <p>PN welcomed everyone and as PPC Chair formally opened the meeting. JO read from the Holy Gospel according to Mark 4:35-41 and provided the opening prayer.</p>	
2.	<p>Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising:</p> <p>The previous minutes were proposed by SH and seconded by MM.</p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p>	
3.	<p>Pilgrimage update:</p> <p>SM confirmed that the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela in September 2024 is now fully booked with 47 pilgrims signed up. SM provided a summary of the venues and activities included in the eight-day pilgrimage from arrival in Madrid with stops at Burgos, Leon, Santiago de Compostela, Fatima and then returning to the UK from Lisbon. There is the opportunity to walk some of the Camino way with one section along the canal near Frómista.</p> <p>The travel company will provide further details to the pilgrims in due course. A meeting prior to the pilgrimage will be organised.</p> <p>PN asked if there would be further opportunities to walk the Camino way and SM confirmed that there is another section that would be suitable on the way into Santiago de Compostela. To assist with the pilgrims wishing to complete some of the walking sections, PN volunteered to pull a local walking plan together (from March to September 2024) to help build up fitness before travelling. This will not be exclusive to the pilgrims but will also be open to others wishing to join the local walking activities.</p>	<p>SM to arrange</p> <p>PN to prepare local walking plan and include in Newsletter</p>

4.	<p>Ministries:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Retreat for Eucharistic Ministers- SM confirmed that he intends to invite the Eucharistic Ministers and Readers to a morning retreat during Lent 2024 for reflection on the ministry; 2. Ministry guide publication status- The guide with the description of the various ministries is now ready and will be provided to attendees at the Lenten retreat; 3. Additional assistance for mini-bus driver- Due to multiple duties at Masses, there is a requirement for further assistance when collecting parishioners (up to 10) attending Mass. MM agreed to advertise for volunteers in the forthcoming Newsletter. Volunteers will also need to be taken through the safeguarding requirements. 	<p><i>SM to progress</i></p> <p><i>SM to organise</i></p> <p><i>MM to add request to Newsletter</i></p>
5.	<p>Fabric:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Electrical work update- A recent electrical inspection around the estate identified some areas that required further attention and remedial action is in progress. KR confirmed that the items for the house and church are completed with the hall items being addressed this week for potential completion by next week. Quotes for LED replacements of existing lighting in the hall (main hall, stage, kitchen, green room) have been received. It was agreed that the lighting improvements should progress with the main hall area being the priority; 2. Pointing of Church- Repointing and cleaning of stonework on the façade of the church is scheduled to take place between April and July 2024. SM confirmed that the funding for this has been kindly provided from the legacy of a recently deceased parishioner; 3. Fascia board around the hall- A parishioner reported that the fascia around the hall may need repaired. An inspection of the fascia below the slates around the perimeter of the hall is required. It may require replacing the old fascia with new PVC panels. Any remedial work may be best included as part of the hall roof work. Action carried forward; 4. Handrail outside the hall- A parishioner reported that the handrail appears to be a bit loose in places and needs to be checked if it just needs fittings re-tightened or something replaced instead. Action carried forward; 5. Display board with past priests- A contractor has been identified and now just needs a sign-writer. The potential location is above the Holy Water font and donation boxes in the porch; 6. Cupboards in Green Room (hall)- MM confirmed that new cupboards are being fitted in the Green Room to provide more adequate storage for both the SVDP and Community Café requirements. The funds will come out of the hall account; 7. Lines in the car park - SM indicated that the lines in the car park would require re-painting and asked if any further improvements were required. No suggestions were forthcoming and the re-painting will be planned in. 	<p><i>SM to consult contractors</i></p> <p><i>SM to consult contractors</i></p> <p><i>SM/KR to progress</i></p>

6.	<p>Finance:</p> <p>SM provided a preview of the parish accounts and confirmed that these would be published for the weekend (27th January 2024).</p>	SM to publish accounts
7.	<p>Social Events:</p> <p>1. Dates for forthcoming events in the church hall are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St. Andrew’s Dinner/Dance (Friday 24th November 2023): Catering for the event was discussed and needs some further clarification on who and what will be provided on the night. This will be required as the tickets will need to go on sale by this weekend to ensure there are adequate numbers. The entertainment will be provided by Sean Kelly. An appeal for raffle items will be added to this weekend’s newsletter. Further help may be required nearer the time; • Children’s Party (confirmed date is Sunday 10th December 2023): A “Date in Diary” item will be added to the newsletter to highlight the various activities planned; • Burn’s Night (Saturday 27th January 2024): MM requested some more volunteers for Saturday night to assist with serving and clearing up duties. KR suggested that some of the Caritas students from Saint Joseph’s Academy may be willing to help. <p>2. Mini-bus trips (2024 plan):</p> <p>The proposed plan for 2024 (March to October) has been prepared with the first trip scheduled for the 15th March 2024 by popular request to New Abbey. Further dates and venues will be advertised in due course.</p> <p>3. Photographs from various trips- PN proposed that photographs taken during the 2023 trips could be displayed at a Community Café. It was agreed that a slideshow could be presented starting from Tuesday 6th February 2024 just prior to the new programme starting in March. KR commented that a new Parish web site is being developed and has a section that will allow an archive of events for future trips through the year.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>KR to check if volunteers available</p> <p>PN to prepare slideshow</p>
8.	<p>Periodic Review of Parish Council membership:</p> <p>SM commented that the membership of the Parish Council was designed to be around 12 individuals at any one time and then have a periodic refresh with three members stepping down where appropriate to allow new members to join without impacting the balance of the group. All the meeting attendees were happy to continue in role. GM commented that it was important that we enable representation from the diverse community within the Parish. However, a further check is required to determine that there is a willingness for others to serve on the Council.</p>	SM to assess interest via a newsletter item

9.	<p>New Bishop's Ordination and ticket allocation:</p> <p>SM confirmed that the Ordination of Bishop-Elect Frank Dougan will take place in Saint Peter in Chains, Ardrossan (plus a livestream in the hall) on Saturday 9th March 2024 with a second ceremony in Saint Margaret's Cathedral, Ayr on Sunday 10th March 2024. Due to the necessary number of invited guests, civic and ecumenical and schools there will be a limited number of places available to be shared across the diocese. A list of parishioners who wish to attend will be requested and then the final invitations will be determined via a ballot. Further details will follow in early February 2024.</p>	
10.	<p>Remembrance Day banners:</p> <p>HM suggested that there was the potential for a Saint Joseph's flag to be presented with the other flags during the Remembrance Day Masses or at other appropriate events. MM will check with the Guides/Scouts regarding where they source their flags.</p>	MM to check flag manufacturers
11.	<p>Previous Open Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It was previously agreed that a Papal Blessing would be suitable way to commemorate the 175th anniversary. The original aim was to achieve this by the end of the anniversary year but it is more appropriate now to coincide it with the formal dedication of the Church. Following the Ordination of the new Bishop, this will be actioned when a date for the dedication is arranged; 2. Car park signage- Appropriate signage relating to car park usage is currently being reviewed; 3. Gritting facility- The gritting equipment (spreader) is now available. MM contacted East Ayrshire Council to supply grit for the winter months however the current supply is solidified and will need to be removed before being able to be replenished with fresh material; 4. Church attendance: SM commented that recovery since COVID has been good however the potential to improve church attendance remains a challenge especially with the 25 to 50 age group. The potential reasons for non-attendance of the younger parishioners at Mass were discussed but it was agreed that the parish would continue to work towards higher attendances. From the recent census check (on 2nd Sunday in November 2023), the number attending the weekend masses was 327, compared with 317 (2022), 97 (2021) and 416 (pre-COVID). The average attendance at the weekend masses is currently 270 to 280; 5. Defibrillator installation and CPR training- The unit has been fully fitted outside the hall and is now available to both the parish and to the wider community. MM previously provided training in the use of the defibrillator and CPR and a further training session will be held on Sunday 3rd December 2023 after Mass. Further details are to be added to the newsletter. The training session was held as planned; 	<p>SM: to progress</p> <p>SM, KR to contact DGr</p> <p>KR to progress</p> <p>Closed</p>

	<p>6. Disability Forum- SM informed the Council that under the Fellowship of Kilmarnock Churches, there was an ongoing forum that was in place to consider and account for disabilities such as hearing, autism and wheelchair access. He requested that a member of the Council or the wider Parish attends the forum as our representative and bring back ideas to be considered. He will provide further information to be circulated to the Council.</p>	<p><i>SM to provide further info to GM for circulation to PPC</i></p>
<p>12.</p>	<p>AOCB:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community Café- MM informed the meeting that the Café is proving to be a great success with 35-40 regulars attending for some food and more importantly a chat. It has been self-supporting via donations from the attendees and is open to not only the parish but wider community. Some people are staying for the two hours and feedback has been that it has been important for people experiencing loneliness. SM wished to pass on his thanks to all the people involved in the successful running the café (from food donations and preparation, working at the café and cash donations); 2. Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)- One candidate is currently going through the process and is expected to formally join the Church during Easter 2024. There have been two further enquiries. Seven children are currently preparing for First Holy Communion; 3. Easter Egg Appeal- AD informed the council that Saint Joseph’s Academy has initiated an appeal for Easter eggs to supply to disadvantaged families and wish to widen that appeal to gain support from the parish. It was agreed that a Newsletter item should be added to support this initiative; 4. Organ Recital Series (2024)- The musical programme for the year is almost ready to be formally announced with five of the seven invited organists confirmed. Also, on the 20th February 2024, the church is hosting an event organised by the Cumnock Tryst involving the Royal Scottish National Orchestra presenting compositions prepared by pupils of Saint Joseph’s Academy; 5. Lent and Easter- SM requested if there were any activities that we should now be re-introducing post COVID. Two were identified: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exposition on Friday afternoon - “Sycamore” on one evening a week (potentially Monday) as a five-week Lenten course. 	<p><i>SM to progress</i></p> <p><i>KR to organise</i></p>
	<p>Date and time of next meeting:</p> <p>Next meeting: Monday, 8th April 2024 at 6:30 pm in St. Joseph’s Church Hall.</p> <p>Opening prayer at next meeting: HM</p>	<p><i>HM to prepare and read out opening prayer at next meeting</i></p>