

St Augustine's Parish Council meeting minutes

Location:	Hartigan Centre
Date:	1 st Dec 2021
Time:	7pm
Attendees:	Fr Peter, Peter Cleary, Genevieve Colbert, Sarah Johnston, Michael Van Wanrooy, Michael Green, Lourdes O'Keefe, Bryan Coleborne, Bob Nash, Annabelle O'Connell, Zuzy Webster
Guest Speakers:	Lara Kirk, Paul O'Mara
Apologies:	None

Agenda items

- Acknowledgement of Country
 - Bryan
- Opening Prayer
 - Genevieve
- Marriage, Family and Relationships Archdiocesan programs - Lara Kirk, Manager, CG Archdiocese
 - Lara provided information on various programs running in the Archd so that we can use them in making plans for the parish.
 - Programs such as
 - the 2021 Advent Video program - Walking Together
 - mini-website connecting people to all the Archdiocesan programs, groups, movements and ministries which support marriage
 - #Iamchurch campaign beginning 6th Dec
 - Lara shared report statistics on The Marriage course, which has been a pilot program running in the ARchD from the end of 2020. The results were very positive, and indicated it was extremely well received by those who undertook it.
 - It is hoped that parishioners might undertake these programs themselves and then use them as a form of outreach to families in Catholic schools.
 - The World Meeting of Families in 2022 will be in Rome. Acknowledging that many who would benefit from attending won't be able to, the Pope has requested that every Diocese around the world might have their own Meeting of Families at the same time.
 - Lara suggested holding a Meeting in all the Deaneries of our ARchd, and asked for ideas, support and prayer about how we can best organise this.

- On behalf of the PPC, Sarah expressed a vote of thanks to Lara for her informative and thought-provoking presentation.

Lara left the meeting following her presentation.

- Finance Committee Report - Paul O'Mara
- Paul attended the meeting to report on the current financial state of the parish, following the recent sale and purchase of properties.
- It takes about \$125K to run the parish each year, and about \$95K is given by parishioners.
 - Factors influencing the income needed per annum include
 - our hefty maintenance bill due to the age of our buildings.
 - the lack of increase of funds from the Planned Giving program over the last 20 years - it has generally stayed the same every year.
- The purchase of 106 Meehan St was funded by the sale of Wee Jasper church and the Dutton St unit. After settlement, fees and taxes are considered, the rough estimate of profit to the parish is \$135K.
 - Meehan St will be rented out for at least 12 months to generate an income for parish projects. The long term intention for the property is for it to become the Presbytery and parish office.
 - Paul asked us to consider what we should do with the 'Old' Presbytery; we need to consider its age, maintenance requirements and proximity to Mt Carmel School in the plans for its future.
- An increase in parish numbers will hopefully lead to an increase in parish funds. However, this will take time to grow. In the meantime, suggestions were made to:
 - Inform the Parish (as has been done before) about where their money is going - via the bulletin and also have someone speak at Masses.
 - Have a Planned Giving drive.

ACTION Paul to speak to the Parish Finance Committee about running a Planned Giving drive in 2022.

- On behalf of the PPC, Sarah expressed a vote of thanks to Paul for his willingness to attend the meeting, his openness and informative presentation.

Paul left the meeting following his presentation.

- Matters arising from the previous Minutes:
- Maria Hicks' Safeguarding presentation at Parish Assembly
 - in further discussion with Fr Peter, it may be better to have Maria's presentation at a PPC meeting next year and invite those who need to be informed of and involved with the Safeguarding policy and procedures to attend.
 - the date of this presentation is TBA.
- Use of portable EFT terminals for collections at Masses
 - Annabelle has not yet resolved this. To be finalised at your earliest convenience Annabelle.
- New collection bags
 - The Cleary Production Co bag was trialled at Mass and needs some fine tuning.

- Thanks again to Peter and Cathy for their ingenuity and willingness for undertaking the project.
- Possibility of financial assistance for COVID loss of income.
 - Paul O'Mara advised Sarah that this was not applicable for us and too late for an application anyway. Bother.
- Ongoing matter of assisting Bob with Maintenance projects within the Parish
 - Sarah has approached some parishioners with building experience for their thoughts on how to address this and if they knew of anyone who could assist. Unfortunately no candidates were raised and no further developments came out of the conversations.
 - It was suggested that if Bob was able to inform us of some tasks that he could delegate to others, that may relieve some pressure.
 - The point was also raised that at a previous PPC meeting, it was recognised that the amount of work Bob does needs to be addressed by a committee rather than just one person.

ACTION Bob will bring a list of duties, projects and other Maintenance matters to the first meeting of 2022, where he will do a walk around with the PPC for us to understand the nature and volume of work to be undertaken.

 - The Maintenance report/duties will be an Agenda item for this meeting and will be given at least half an hour of time for discussion.
- Confirmation of previous minutes:
- Christmas Masses
 - Gunning has firmly requested their Christmas Day Mass be changed back to 5pm on Christmas Eve, so Yass Christmas Eve service will be at 7pm.
 - Yass Christmas Eve Mass will be held at Mt Carmel School in the outdoor covered area, with people invited to bring their own picnic rug/chairs. Some chairs will be set up.
 - Carols will be sung from 6.30pm

ACTION Annabelle to find a Santa for a pre-Mass visit.
- Defibrillator purchase
 - Lourdes raised an excellent point that a defibrillator would be a wise purchase in light of the average age of our parishioners. Whilst the church is close to the Ambulance station and hospital, it is recognised that the response time to an emergency is critical, and a defibrillator in the church or Hartigan Centre would be life-saving.

ACTION Bob is approaching someone he thinks may be in a position to donate one.
- Morning Teas on Sundays
 - A new urn needs to be purchased as the old one is a safety hazard; also, a shade cover of some sort needs to be provided for these gatherings, especially for Summer sun and Winter rain.
 - The suggestion was made to plan for starting in early 2022, in light of the ever changing COVID restrictions, and on a 1st or 3rd Sunday when there are likely to be more Murrumbateman parishioners attending.
 - The date of the first one is TBC, but in the meantime we can prepare everything and be ready to go.

ACTION Lourdes to buy a new urn and a weatherproof shade cover?

- Sisters of Mercy Farewell
 - A new date to be set for 2022.
 - **ACTION** Sarah to contact Sr. Patricia to see if we can find a suitable date for the farewell.

- Parish Assembly
 - proposed new date is Saturday 19th March 2022, on the Feast of St Joseph.
 - The suggestion was made to begin the assembly on the evening of Friday 18th March, and a small committee will be formed to organise the event.
 - Fr Tony Percy and some Archdiocesan representatives will be attending the Assembly/doing a walk around.

Bob left the meeting in order to be home for Lois' care.

- Divine Renovation (DR) Conference Report
 - The DR movement is about moving from a model of maintenance to mission, both in terms of
 - moving a parish from concentrating the majority of our efforts and money into parish buildings,
 - simply maintaining the number of those attending Mass, being involved in Ministries etc, and doing more in our mission to truly live the Gospel, make disciples of others and bring parishes to life.
 - So the conference was about some shared experience of doing this, in the context of what key points are essential for success, and some practical points for achieving this mission.
 - Fr James Mallon's talk - Leadership
 - He presented 3 important elements of leadership:
 - 1. Good leadership is the transformation /change of a system.
 - As a Christian community, the model of 'servant leadership' as that of Jesus needs to be our guide - in washing the disciples' feet, the Lord of all took the 'bum job'. We need to be prepared to do, not just demand/delegate, and do the hard, unpleasant tasks too.
 - 2. Empower others - Ephesians 4, St Paul talks about Christ equipping/empowering the saints to build the church.
 - Fr James suggested not just accepting anyone who volunteers for leadership roles unless they are suitable; more discernment of the right person and invitations should be extended, rather than accepting the first person who raises their hand.
 - 3. Leadership needs to be a 'team sport'
 - There are 3 very important reasons for this:
 - 1. If we're going to change the culture of the church, we will need to take some risks, and taking risks on your own is not wise. We can support each other in the apprehension and the fails. We can also keep each other accountable and name blind spots when necessary.
 - 2. We have different gifts and talents, and different faults as well, and we need people around us who will put the brakes on when needed, and will keep us accountable to each other. Also, there will be difficult moments

during any process of change, so having other people around us can help lessen or soothe painful moments.

- 3. Shared leadership means shared goals - another 3 main points about this:
 - We **must** be united in our vision. This sets the stage for healthy disagreement, if we are all going in the same direction.
 - If we have a balance of strengths in the team, we have more chance of bringing about change. If we're all a bunch of thinkers, no action will be taken on great ideas, and if we're all do-ers, with no common purpose or new ideas, nothing will happen either.
 - We need to be open and honest with one another, ready to admit feelings and mistakes, be ready to ask for help, and give and receive honest feedback - ie, be vulnerable and trust each other.

- Other points from discussion panels I thought worth noting:
 - People re-engaging with their faith or finding their faith are making a real personal commitment in this day and age, where once it was always just an assumed 'habit', so their interest and/or commitment is truly grounded and authentic.
 - Alpha for Catholics is a good program for bringing some discussion and life back into parish groups and informing new Catholic Christians.
 - Examples were given of parishes that are now running their 8th Alpha for Catholics program, which inevitably ends up with more people coming to Mass, being involved in parish life (including running the program itself) and the difference is seen in the collection monies (this was noted by the speaker).
 - People who are re-engaging with their faith generally go to Mass as a starting point, so if they come and find that it's a really good experience, they will want to come again. Make an effort to 'do good Mass'! Good music and a good homily were mentioned in particular.
 - Obstacles impeding the mission need to be addressed - which are really hard when you are a priest with no staff, a huge maintenance list (ie. St Augustine's Yass!!! And many regional/rural parishes) - a talk about this issue on **24th Feb 2022 at 7pm, by Daniel Ang.**

- Deacon Peter Pellicaan's talk - The Holy Spirit
 - Peter used 'Dry Bones' story from Ezekiel to illustrate both the current state of the church in Australia generally, meaning it speaks to both the lack of people attending church and the (sometimes) lack of spirit within church communities.
 - Are the fruits of the Spirit obvious within our community?
 - Every confirmed Catholic has been given the gift of the Holy Spirit, which is the animator of us and the Body of Christ, the Church.
 - The HS is at the heart of every Sacrament within the Church, and the CCC states that 'the fruits of the sacraments also depend on the disposition of the one who receives them'. We each need to be completely open to the Holy Spirit, ie. as open as Mary was. She was utterly, completely, life-changingly open.
 - Let us therefore call on the Holy Spirit daily to animate ourselves, and pray for others in the HS. With the priest's permission, and if acceptable, we can also offer to pray over people before and/or after Mass.
 - 'We will only come to life in the measure that we are open to and filled by the Spirit'.

- Day for PPC Meetings next year
 - Fr Peter is unavailable on Wednesdays, so the day and time of meetings next year will be Tuesdays at 6.30pm, beginning in February and being held every 6 weeks.

- Discussion of Matters from reports submitted
 - Prinicpal's report - Michael G requested the last Heritage report of the buildings to assist with the Master Plan underway for Mt Carmel.
ACTION Bob to see if he is able to obtain a copy.

- AOB (Last agenda item but discussed before Bob departed)
 - Sarah expressed a sincere vote of thanks to Bob for his effort in organising the new carpet in the church, and replacing the pews. It looks fantastic and has been very well received; others reported they had heard very positive comments from other parishioners.
 - Bob requested that his thoughts about the RCIA program from the last meeting be added to the minutes of that meeting.
 - **ACTION** Bob to email Annabelle the points to be added.
 - This matter led to Fr Peter asking if anyone was interested in being the parish RCIA coordinator, Genevieve volunteered. Many thanks Genevieve.
 - **ACTION** Sarah to contact Maureen Collins and Pauline Abbey regarding resuming their roles in contacting as many people who have undertaken the RCIA program in the parish.

- **Next Meeting: February 2022, date TBA.**

Discussion points/Action items	Owner(s)	Deadline	Status
Ecumenism: Nothing to report	Bryan		
Education: Nothing to report ACTION Genevieve volunteered to be the parish RCIA Coordinator	Genevieve		
Liturgy: No further discussion on submitted report	Peter C		
Maintenance: Much discussion. ACTION - approach a potential defibrillator donor - investigate the possibility of obtaining a copy of the last Heritage report that was done on the parish buildings - send RCIA points to Annabelle for inclusion in last meeting's minutes	Bob		

Mt Carmel School: verbal request to Bob to see if a Heritage report can be obtained for the Mt Carmel Master Plan	Michael Green		
Social: Morning Teas discussion ACTION - A new urn to be purchased.	Lourdes		
Social Justice: No further discussion on submitted report ACTION - contact Sr Patricia regarding a date in 2022 for the Srs of Mercy farewell	Sarah		
Welfare: No further discussion on submitted report	Michael Van Wanrooy		
Youth: No further discussion on submitted report ACTION - Resolve the EFT payment terminal arrangements for collections ASAP - find a Santa for pre Christmas Eve Mass	Annabelle		