

St Joseph and St Patrick's, Wemyss Bay

Annual General Meeting

Thursday 21 October 2021

Attendees: Louise McCauley, Gerry McCauley, Marcus Barry, Isobel Quinn, Owen Quinn, Gillian Hall, John Wilson, Anne Clark, Michael Tormey, Father Berry, Helen McMunn, Brian Blacklaw, Pauline Redmond, Christine Malcolmson, Martin McCauley.

Apologies: Julia Gibson, Hazel Mitchell.

1. WELCOME AND OPENING PRAYER

Marcus opened our AGM and Father Berry lead everyone in a prayer of encouragement for the year ahead.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTE

The minutes from our last AGM were approved with the addition of Pauline Redmond's name to be added to the list of attendees.

3. REVIEW OF THE YEARS 2019-2021

It was acknowledged that the biggest challenge we faced as a parish during the pandemic was the difficulties regarding coming to Mass.

- **Defibrillator Training:** Going back to 8 December 2019 we had the defibrillator training in the church hall which was well attended. Father Berry advised that the defibrillator machine has been taken twice and used once. He informed us that it costs £27 every time the pads are removed, whether they are actually used or not. Going forward we could possibly look to fund raise to help with the upkeep of the defibrillator machine.
- **Alpha Course:** Leading up to the end of January 2020 we had completed the six Alpha Course Sessions. The proposal was to then run a ten week Catholicism course open to all, not just Alpha attendees, This was put on hold during lockdown.
- **Passover:** We believe it is our turn to hold the next Passover meal in 2022 but will double check this.
- **St Columba's High School:** At our last meeting in December 2019, we discussed the issues regarding enrolment of Inverkip and Wemyss Bay children. Inverclyde Council's consultation process regarding this was halted due to Covid. Father Berry advised that is his understanding that children who are baptised will be given a priority in the enrolment process at St Columba's

4. COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

Marcus has resigned as Chairman and handed over to Helen leaving the Vice Chair position vacant. Louise was proposed and seconded as our new Vice Chair and Gillian advised she is happy to continue as Secretary for the coming year.

On behalf of the Council, Helen thanked Marcus for his hard work, leadership, and excellent stewardship over the past years as Chairman and presented him with a small gift as a token of our appreciation.

Gerry and Christine were welcomed as new members of the PPC.

5. ROADMAP "BACK TO NORMAL"

Gerry provided a handout with information regarding activities and proposed dates we could, potentially look to open our Church up gradually.

It has been ten weeks since the government removed restrictions and at the time the overall infection rates in Inverclyde were coming down but have now levelled off. Various discussions followed regarding the possibility of opening up a number of weekend masses without the need to book. It was felt a gradual opening up, rather than doing it all at once would be difficult from an admin perspective. It was therefore agreed that the best way forward is to go ahead and open the church for masses without the need to book. This will take place on the week beginning 1 November 2021. It will be announced the weekend prior to 1 November to avoid any confusion. Stewards will still be in place for the time being and feedback from parishioners will be encouraged to allow us to deal with any issues that may arise.

The first Friday in Advent on 28 November 2021 we will reintroduce missalettes. The reintroduction of hymns was also discussed. Father Berry has spoken with Liz Hart the organist who is happy in general to return to playing the organ at Sunday morning Mass. There was a thought that initially it maybe just to play the music and we can reintroduce singing and hymn books some time after. This will be organised between Father Berry and Liz. Father Berry is unsure as to when the altar servers will return. This will be reviewed at our next meeting.

On 25 October we will trial the receiving of communion at the altar. When mass is fully opened up, the church hall will be reopened allowing the stall to be up and running as well.

6. LOCAL CONSULTATION FOR THE SYNOD OF BISHOPS

A pastoral letter was read out from the pulpit last Sunday 17 October 2021 from the Bishop regarding Pope Francis' request for the church to begin a synodal journey in the lead up to the next Synod of Bishops in Rome in 2023.

This will be discussed initially at PPC level and a meeting of PPC representatives is taking place on 27 November 2021 with Helen as our parish representative. At the meeting tonight we felt it was important that the discussions at these meetings were not controlled by guided questions and we pray for the success of the Synod.

7. UPDATE ON FINANCES

Father Berry advised that we have paid off approximately £40,000 of our Parish loan over the past year which is a great achievement. He feels very content and humbled over the past year and noted that some contributors are not even attending mass at the moment. Cash collections are understandably down whilst standing orders are significantly up. Marcus asked if the collection baskets would be reintroduced and passed amongst the congregation, but Father Berry advised they would remain at the back of the church for the time being.

8. MATN

Brian provided handouts showing us the structure of the Diocese and the structure of the Diocesan Curia. In the five years since MATN began the Diocese has some structure, and it has some lay input but are we where we would have expected to be? Brian advised that as he has reached canonical retirement age he has retired from MATN and is no longer directly involved.

9. AOCB

Our Parish Foodbank collection will be on Saturday 6 November 2021 with donations to the church hall from 10am – 1pm. Details to be published in the bulletin.

Louise advised that the social committee will be up and running again soon with fundraising events planned for 2022.

The Jesse Tree will be reintroduced for Advent 2021 and Isobel will liaise with the Sisters of the Gospel of Life to plan this. It is proposed that the tree could be displayed on the altar as usual but suggestions as to possible donations could be included in the bulletin. The donations could be placed at the back of the church for collection to avoid excessive traffic on the altar.

Date of next meeting is Thursday 2 December 2021.

Helen thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting.