

Holy Family Parish

'A praying, caring community, centred in Christ'

Pastoral Council Report to Parishioners 2016 – 2017

Holy Family Parish Pastoral Council is a consultative body made up of members of the Laity and Clergy working together to consider and plan for the current and future pastoral needs of the parish. In accordance with Canon Law [536] the role of the Pastoral Council is "to examine and consider all that relates to pastoral issues and to offer practical recommendations on these matters, so that the life and activity of the people of God can be brought into greater conformity with the Gospel".

Currently the members of the Pastoral Council are:

Aidan Donaldson [Chairman] Catherine Gillespie [Secretary] Father Paul Strain Adm, Father Paul Morely, Canon Brendan Murray, Martin Bradley, Nora Byrne, Aideen D'Arcy, Ann D'Arcy, Brendan Dowd, Pauline Dowd, Máire Hughes, Maurice Jordan, Carol McLaughlin, Brian Shannon.

Over the last 12 months, the Pastoral Council has focused on the following issues and activities:

1. An Open, Welcoming Community:

Formation of Visitation Ministry: We are considering the formation of a Visitation Ministry to complement the existing Ministries within the parish.

Formation of Transport Ministry: We considered the idea of forming a Transport Ministry to ensure that elderly or disabled people could get to Mass and other Liturgical Services. Following consultation, we ascertained that there currently is no demand for such a service, but will keep the situation under review.

Formation of Dementia, Mental Health and Inclusion Ministry: In conjunction with the NI Dementia Centre and the Welcome Committee, we propose to develop a Ministry to offer practical support to people with dementia and other mental health issues, together with their families to participate in the Liturgy.

Care Fair: We are planning a Care Fair within the next 12 months. This initiative will offer parishioners the opportunity to engage with voluntary and statutory organisations that offer support and care.

Young People – Pope John Paul II Awards: In conjunction with Living Youth, we plan to build on the success of the Pope John Paul II Award programme and encourage the continuing involvement John Paul II Award students in a wide range of activities within the parish.

Inter-Church and Inter-faith dialogue: Promoting the work of the 4 Bridges Partnership as well as developing links at community level including consideration of the re-introduction of the Annual Carol Walk between the 4 main Churches – Cavehill Methodist, St Peter's Church of Ireland, Fortwilliam Macrory Presbyterian and Rosemary Presbyterian.

Parish Bulletin: The parish Bulletin has been redesigned to facilitate improved communication with parishioners.

Communication: Promoting the work and activities of Groups and Organisations within the parish to increase opportunities for volunteering and participation.

Welcome Booklet: The production of a Welcome – Information Booklet to provide a comprehensive directory of services, facilities etc within the parish is underway.

Information to Parishioners: We propose to improve the quality of information, minutes of meetings etc. displayed on notice boards and on the website to enhance the flow of timely information to parishioners.

Hospitality Ministry: The Hospitality Ministry provides refreshments after Masses in Holy Family Church and St Therese Church on the first Sunday of the month, as well as after Taize Prayer Around the Cross and other liturgical services.

Safeguarding: Ensure that the highest standards of safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults continue to operate in our parish.

2. Faith and Worship:

Adult Faith Development: We provided opportunities for Adult Faith Development through programmes including – Catholicism, Unlocking the Mysteries of the Bible, The Pivotal Players, Mary – a Biblical Walk with the Blessed Mother, in addition to identifying resources for adult catechetical programmes.

World Meeting of Families 2018: We propose to deliver a programme to enable parishioners to prepare for and participate in the World Meeting of Families, 2018.

3. Lay Participation:

Co-responsibility: Developing co-responsible leadership with the Priests, Religious and Laity of our parish and North Belfast Pastoral Community.

Volunteering: Promote and encourage volunteering within the parish through organising events such as - a celebratory Mass for volunteers to recognise their contribution to the pastoral and social life of the parish, and a Seminar for like minded groups and organisations to facilitate networking and sharing of expertise.

4. Passing on the Faith:

IBDI: Continue to participate in and promote the work of the Irish Bishops Drugs Initiative for the benefit of young people to encourage them to make healthy lifestyle choices.

Youth Faith Development Programme: Encourage the work of the YFDP based in 65 Somerton Road.

Parish GIFT [Growing in Faith Together] Programme 1,2,3: Promote the development of the GIFT Programme within the parish.

Children's Liturgy: Continue to encourage children to participate in the Children's Liturgy Programme, the Family Mass and Children's Choir

Scouts, Guides: Encourage and promote the work of the Guide and Scout movement within the parish to facilitate recruitment and heighten awareness of their activities.

5. Vision for the Future – Option Appraisal:

The Pastoral Council in partnership with the Finance Committee will play a pivotal role in progressing the Vision For the Future – Option Appraisal process to plan in a strategic way to meet the long term liturgical, pastoral and social needs of the parish.

Thank you for the interest that you have taken in the work of the Pastoral Council. We would welcome your feedback, so if you would like to make a comment or suggestion, please do not hesitate to contact any member of the Pastoral Council or the Parish Office. E: holyfamily@downandconnor.org T: 028 90743119

Father Paul Strain Adm and the Pastoral Council