

## NOTICE OF MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of St Joseph's Parish, Papanui, Christchurch, will be held in St Gregory's Parish Centre, Cotswold Avenue on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2018 at 11.30am.

### AGENDA

1. Prayer
2. Welcome
3. Apologies
4. Confirmation of minutes of AGM – 27<sup>th</sup> August 2017
5. Priest's Report
6. Financial Report
7. Parish Group Reports
8. Submitted questions/comments
9. General Business
10. Closing prayer

### **MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF ST JOSEPH'S PARISH PAPANUI HELD 27<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2017 – 11.20AM AT ST GREGORY'S CHURCH**

**PRESENT:** Fr John Adams, Graeme Wilson and 36 other parishioners - Graeme welcomed all to the meeting and Fr John opened the meeting with a prayer.

**APOLOGIES:** Frank & Audrey Newsome, Ken & Linlee Popham, David Holland, Robin Hart, John & Helen Dooley, Myra Barry.

**MINUTES OF 2016 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:** Graeme Wilson read the 2016 minutes that had been published and included in the annual report. They were accepted (Graeme Wilson/Frank Doherty/carried) and signed as being a true and accurate record.

**MATTERS ARISING:** The question of no existing parish council after a whole year was raised. Fr John said he had begun discussions with someone, who had put their hand up. He said there was no lack of support and meetings with the building group, finance committee and BOT. A parish council is not a requirement for the church but he hoped a dynamic and driven council would eventuate.

**PRIEST'S REPORT:** Fr John spoke briefly saying the parish was going well and stronger than last year. He was pleased with Fr Thanh's presence and the prayer groups that were doing well. He said the building of a new church was a much longer process than he thought it would be. Initially the diocese was not supportive of the church/school hall vision but they were 'warming up' to it, as a modern operable wall would not hinder noise levels. Plans needed to go back to the drawing board now. St Gregory's Church was marvellous to have at this time but was limited on space. The question was raised about the demolition of some school buildings and the presbytery. This would happen after consultation with the Building & Sites Committee, Finance Committee, College of Consultors and the bishop. Fr John said the process would still go ahead even without a bishop. He thanked all for attending the meeting and asked his report be adopted. (Fr John/Janette McKee/carried)

**FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT:** Graeme Wilson reported that collections were down 2.5% and said there must be a way to encourage new givers. He advised the rental income had improved but expenses were up this year as improvements to these houses were made. He thanked Alan Ryder for all his work on this maintenance programme. Graeme said the building project

had 'stalled a little' and in time would require financial support from parishioners. He said they were conscious of the overall expenses creeping up slightly. Graeme said the diocesan insurance was not included as this was retained centrally. He said there were still challenges ahead. Graeme mentioned more work was being done regarding health and safety issues. He was happy the parish team visited so many parishioners. He finished by thanking Fr John for his leadership, Fr Thanh, the wider parish team, Wilma and Michael Schimanski. No-one queried Graeme, so he asked for the adoption of his report. (Graeme Wilson/Tim O'Sullivan/carried)

**PLANNING GROUP REPORT:** Graeme spoke of the combined parish/school rebuild. After a slow start with the diocese they were happier now to look at the proposal. He thanked Aaron Richards and Wendy Skinner (both present) for their input and acknowledge two key issues; noise levels and the safety of the children. Ian Krause Architects (now rebranded IKON Architects) have been reengaged to move the building project forward.

**SCHOOL PRINCIPAL'S REPORT:** Aaron Richards said he was happy as the new principal and it was with joy he and his family would join the St Joseph's community. He acknowledged Wendy and Fr John and the past leaders/principals for the strength and position the school has in now. He said the roll was full with 98% preference children and of that 90% were baptised showing a rich Catholic environment that parents valued. Aaron also mentioned the strong academic side to the school. He thanked Wilma for her assistance, especially re diocesan fees, and the pastoral associates. The question was raised as to what percentage of the school were Filipino compared to other schools. Aaron was unsure of this but said they were a strong Catholic respectful community.

**GENERAL BUSINESS:** Graeme thanked the writers of the reports and gave a brief summary of them. He said the AGM report was on the website but hard copies were available. He asked these written reports be adopted (Graeme Wilson/Wilma Vertogen/carried)

Comment was made about the lack of numbers in the Marian Group and what the future of this group was.

The late arrival of school children to Friday morning Masses was frustrating - this would be improved.

Mention was made about the inconsistency of the heating at St Gregory's Church. Turning heaters off too early was leaving some parishioners cold. This would be monitored and hopefully corrected.

A question was raised about papal awards recognising long and dedicated service by parishioners of St Joseph's Parish. Fr John mentioned that a few were 'in the pipeline'. Russell McKee had been granted an international award for the work he did for the St Vincent de Paul Society. This had been published in the church bulletin.

Mention was made that the precious blood sometimes ran out. Fr John said it was difficult to moderate this because if there was a lot left over it had to be consumed. An option was to return to receiving communion under the one form.

There was a comment about the priests always standing on the same side when distributing Holy Communion. They could perhaps try standing on alternative sides.

A member of the choir asked if more permanent lighting could be installed at the back of the church, where the choir sit. This will be looked into.

Fr John closed the meeting with a prayer at noon.

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

## PRIEST'S REPORT

I am happy to be able to present to you my annual report for our parish AGM. I am now in my 8<sup>th</sup> year here at St Joseph's and I continue to find the experience of my first parish to be an invigorating one.

I think I must begin this report where we all must begin, and that is by reflecting on our relationship with Jesus Christ. Parish life is in vain if Jesus, the Son of God, is not at the centre of all we do here. The temptation for me as a parish priest is to look to other evidence of our performance as a parish, when in fact we ought to be judged on our faithfulness to the mission entrusted to us of living and spreading the gospel.

I believe that there are good signs regarding the spiritual health of our parish. We continue to have sound attendance at our weekend and week-day Masses. We have numerous prayer groups that meet during the week, and there is a good variety of one off initiatives, such as our spiritual book give aways, and the current merciful programme. Seasons for Growth is about to begin in the parish once again as is RCIA. It's good to see the graduates of this programme from past year active in parish life. We have had an initial experience of Alpha in the parish and our Ablaze Alumni have met on occasion to pray together and offer me advice. It was lovely to see a good sized group of our mothers head away for a 'spiritual day' out at the Beatitudes Community last weekend. I recently fielded a request to start a men's prayer group and I have hosted a young adult men's group who meet regularly on a Wednesday evening.

Pastorally we continue with baptism and marriage preparation and bereavement care which we are currently improving to provide some post bereavement care. We have started a table tennis club on Sunday afternoons which has proved popular with some families particularly from other cultures. Our mission team is currently exploring the possibility of a group travelling to Vanimo in Papua New Guinea to help a group of religious sisters. A reconnaissance mission will hopefully depart in November.

Not all of us can travel on a mission trip, but here, at home, we continue to have a large number of people on rosters who are generous in their regular undertaking of various parish ministries. They, week in week out, give of their time, thank you to them. Thank you to those who clean, arrange flowers, wash linen, work as sacristans, sing in choirs, altar serve, greet, collect, count, keep our Catholic stall open, garden, teach our children, run children's liturgy, play the organ and the other myriad of jobs, many of which often go unnoticed. Your contribution to the parish makes it what it is.

I am very keen to work more collaboratively with St Josephs School. To that end we have trialed having two classes from the school join us once a month at the 8.30am Mass. We are sponsoring a forming the faith for new parents to the school and I meet regularly with Aaron Richards, the school principal. Fr Thanh and I try to visit each week and we bus the whole school to St Gregory's Church several times a year, so we can celebrate Mass together, although I note that the school can now barely fit into the church.

I think all of you know that +Paul has asked that all building work in Christchurch be put on hold until he and his advisors have the chance to take a fresh look at the diocese as a whole. This means, of course, that our St Joseph's project is once again on hold.

I want to once again thank our two pastoral assistants, Irene Maguire and Lauren Butler who work tirelessly around the parish. Our parish office is so often the 'first port of call' for those who connect with us; I thank Wilma for her very good work as she completes another year here at St Joseph's Parish.

I mentioned at our last AGM my willingness to reconvene a parish council. To that end I have invited a group of our Ablaze conference attendees to form the nucleus of a new council. They have responded generously to this invitation. I hope there will be other parishioners who might offer their time and energy to this group.

We are lucky to have a very able and prudent finance committee, consisting of Graeme Wilson and Michael Schimanski who provide me with very good advice and see that our finances are skillfully administered – thank you to them.

We continue to support the young people of our parish through our youth groups, led by three young adults who work hard at making our Catholic Faith accessible to the young people of this place. My thanks to Adam, Nicole and Nathan.

How lucky have we been to have had the very good work of Fr Thanh as the assistant priest here these past two and a half years. Fr Thanh is a fine priest and I thank him for his wonderful contribution to this parish.

Let's call once again on the intercession of our patron St Joseph, the strong gentle guardian of the child Jesus, continue to watch over and guide our parish.

*Fr John Adams*

## FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

This year the parish financial statements have been prepared on a new basis. This is a requirement of the diocese. We are a significant parish within the diocese, and the diocese has to prepare more extensive financial statements for the Charities Commission – so it flows to us as well.

Our financial statements are also now reviewed by accountants Ashton Wheelans.

A full set of our statements and the accountant's report is available on our parish website.

A key change is the inclusion of depreciation expense in our result. Depreciation is a non-cash expense which recognises that our plant and equipment is ageing and will ultimately need to be replaced, so these assets are written down as an expense over their useful lives. This expense is calculated in accordance with the wider diocesan financial policies.

Our statements for the year to March show a deficit (loss) of \$160,000. If we adjust for depreciation we show a small surplus of \$22,000, but if we then allow for the purchase of new assets we made during the last year (\$9,000) our cash surplus was only \$13,000. Accounting smoke and mirrors aside - we are spending close to everything we receive, and our income is falling.

This year, our collections have fallen again – a 1.2% reduction from last year, which followed a 2.5% reduction in the prior year.

For the last few years we've deferred undertaking a major fund-raising round or even a review of our gifting programme as we've anticipated an imminent programme to fund our rebuild, but we're in a position where we need to take some action.

Our thanks go to those who have continued to make a financial contribution to our parish. We are looking at what we can do to encourage new parishioners to contribute financially, and for our young moving into employment to consider adding their financial support.

Our overall expenses have remained stable year on year, despite simple inflationary pressure. We are conscious of managing those costs.

The next few years will continue to pose financial challenges for us as we face up to the cost of a new church as well as maintaining (or hopefully expanding) our day-to-day operations.

Looking forward, we want to do more to address our obligations under health and safety legislation to provide a safe and healthy working environment for the parish team, volunteers, parishioners and visitors.

My thanks go to Fr John for his continued leadership of our parish, to Fr Thanh, and to the wider parish team. Wilma, thanks for your dedication and the fine work you perform. Thanks also to Michael Schimanski for his considerable and valuable contribution to our committee throughout the year.

*Graeme Wilson*

## SCHOOL PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The New Zealand Bishops' Conference describes Catholic schools as an arm of the parish, fulfilling its vocation to be a genuine experience of Church within the organic pastoral work of the parish community.

This year the school has worked hard to ensure that the link between the school and the parish is strong and continues to strengthen. The school has a number of practices in place to achieve this. These practices include

- Weekly visits to the school by Fr John and Fr Thanh
- Class attendance at Mass on Friday morning
- Annual St Vincent De Paul car drive
- School promotion of the parish sacramental programme

This year we have initiated a number of new initiatives to further strengthen the vision of the school and parish being one body in Christ. These new initiatives include:

- The establishment of a Parish Pastoral Care Network - The school initiated a meeting with various groups from the parish who provide support to our community. These groups included: school principal, school DP (SENCO), parent support group, St Vincent De Paul and a parish pastoral associate. The purpose of the meeting was to initiate a network where a wrap around service could be provided to assist families in need. All present were fully supportive of the concept.

Initially we will move forward by holding monthly meetings. All representative groups will reach out to their communities to identify areas of need.

- Class attendance at Sunday Mass - Approximately 20% of school families attend Mass. To promote Mass attendance we have scheduled each class to attend Mass once a year and worship together with the parish. During the Mass students take on various responsibilities for the Mass. This includes, greeters, readers, Prayer of the Faithful, etc.

The primary purpose of a Catholic school is to work with our parish to provide Catholic children with an opportunity to develop their faith in a Catholic environment. School enrolment statistics indicate that the school achieves their goal with 98% of the school roll consisting of students with preference certificates. Further analysis confirms that 95% of students are baptised within the Catholic Church. On comparison with other schools from around the country the proportion of students who are preference and who are baptised is very high.

There is an extremely high demand on the school roll. The school is currently working at its enrolment cap. The side effect of this situation is the school is turning away Catholic families because we do not have space. The school has approached the Catholic Education Office regarding this issue who in turn have consulted the Ministry of Education. The Catholic Education Office has informed us that the current government would not consider a roll increase that would allow us to accept more Catholic students because neighbouring state schools are not full.

The school also plays an important role with working with the parish to evangelise. Over the last year the school has had a number of families and/or children receive the sacrament of baptism. This evangelisation has also included a number of Chinese families who have decided to undergo formation. I would like to thank the diocese for supporting these families by providing spiritual leaders and interpreters.

The school also works collaboratively with the parish in providing students access to the sacraments of First Holy Communion and Confirmation. I would like to thank Irene Maguire and Lauren Butler for leading our children and their parents through this programme.

I would like to acknowledge the relationship that Fr John and Fr Thanh have maintained with our staff and students through their regular visits. Fr John is also a special character trustee on the Board of Trustees. The special character trustees play an important role in not only connecting parish and school but also preserving and promoting the special character of the school at a governance level.

I would also like to thank Wilma Vertogen, parish secretary, for all her hard work meeting new families and initiating the preference process for families.

St Joseph's School is a member of the Christchurch Catholic Schools Community of Learning. In total there are another thirteen Catholic primary and secondary schools in this network. Our participation in this network has drawn us closer to our secondary schools. Villa Maria College has assisted St Joseph's School review its science programme while St Bede's College has provided additional science teaching. Our senior teachers have visited Marian College and sat in on a number of mathematics lessons.

St Joseph's School also plays an active role within the Catholic School's network with the school principal sitting on the Principals' Executive and Liz Beattie (DP) leading the Network Wellbeing team.

The school continues to provide our wider community with ongoing pastoral support. During 2017 over \$11,000 was donated from school mission fundraising to a variety of mission appeals. All of this money was given to Catholic agencies to support families in need throughout New Zealand and the Pacific. Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand was one of the main recipients of our donation.

The Parent Teacher Association and Family Care Group continue to provide practical support for families in need. This includes, but is not limited to, providing families in need with meals or assistance.

In summary I believe that our vision to have a school and parish joining together as one body in Christ is being realised. It is my hope that future decisions about our church and school will provide us an opportunity to lift this vision to a new level.

*Aaron Richards*

## ST JOSEPH'S PLANNING GROUP

The planning group comprises Fr John Adams, Melissa Segar, Marianne Daly, Wendy Skinner, Francois Baudet and Graeme Wilson.

At last year's AGM we were hopeful that we would soon be able to share our draft designs for a new St Joseph's Church, together with a new presbytery, a day chapel, and a hall for use by, and jointly funded by, school and parish - which would also provide an overflow space for large Masses.

Since that time we gained agreement from Fr Rick, in his role as Diocesan Administrator, to proceed with the detailed design – including a focus on how the interior would look. We had agreement to present our designs to parishioners and were preparing to do so, but subsequently we had permission withdrawn by the diocese as Bishop Paul wanted to have the chance to consider where a new St Joseph's Church would fit in with his plans for the diocese.

However, our rebuild project is now on hold at Bishop Paul's direction.

In the latest diocesan *Inform* magazine, our bishop writes:

*One of the realities that we are dealing with in our diocese is the number of priests that we have. At present we have 18 priests under 75 who are incardinated in the diocese. We have 8 priests on loan from other countries and the Society of Mary and the Community of St John who staff two parishes. We have at the moment 26 parishes. In the next ten years we will have 7 priests who will retire and if we are fortunate we will have five more ordinations. These are very real factors and are leading me to look again at the number of parishes we have and how we are organized. This has meant that at present we are putting a hold on any further building projects and programmes in Christchurch city which have not already begun construction, so that we can ensure we have the appropriate structures for the future needs and staffing abilities of the diocese. This is obviously a significant matter for us all and there will be more on what this might look like and discussions with people as we go forward.*

We await the outcome of Bishop Paul's review to give us a clearer picture of our future. Please keep his review in your prayers.

It's been a very real pleasure to work with the other members of the planning group, and I want to thank them for the enormous amount of time and effort they've willingly contributed and the wonderful spirit in which the process has been undertaken.

*Graeme Wilson*

## PASTORAL ASSOCIATES' REPORTS

My role here as a pastoral associate continues to be a rewarding one and I am very grateful to be part of so many people's journey here at St Joseph's Parish in Papanui.

I want to say thank you to Fr John and Fr Thanh – it is a pleasure working alongside both of them.

A special thank you to Lauren Butler. I believe, as pastoral associates, we are a great team, and we always work towards our main focus - bringing Jesus to whomever we meet, in whatever way we can.

Every day can be so different, and in all honesty, I really love that. The last twelve months have been very busy with a variety of events.

Confirmation last year saw 24 people receive the Sacrament of Confirmation in October. Our St Joseph's youth group leaders were wonderful to work with as we taught the candidates about the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit and how the Sacrament of Confirmation can enliven their lives.

First Holy Communion began in March and concluded in June. There were 51 young children who received the Sacrament of Reconciliation and Eucharist. We were blessed with a wonderful team of leaders (Jo Sutcliffe, Kate Clarkson, Megan Stewart, Paula Baudet and Siew Lai Manzano.) A special thank you to these awesome ladies for all their help. Thanks also to the people working with Sarah Bendall and Shelly O'Donnell for the catering of the children's celebration party after both of the Masses.

I really enjoy supporting Ken Joblin, our Musical Director, and working alongside him coordinating and creating beautiful music for our Masses.

We are very blessed to have several people in our parish that are part of a Bereavement Care Team. Lauren and I are working with this team to establish post bereavement support for those who grieve a loved one.

Another role I have is co-ordinating the wonderful people who are on our welcome team for our weekend Masses. Thank you to all of them for the commitment they have in this very important ministry of greeting our parishioners as they come into Mass.

On a diocesan level, I worked with a team of people co-ordinating the exciting two day conference Ablaze to Christchurch in November.

During the year – there has been ongoing spiritual direction and pastoral care training days. These opportunities have been very enlightening and enabling for spiritual and professional development.

Finally one of the most rewarding parts of my role is visiting people in their homes or hospital. I often get the chance to take Holy Communion to them.

I am quite honoured to be working for this parish and to be part of the people's lives that I meet.

*Irene Maguire*

**SACRISTY:** A team of eleven sacristans faithfully prepare the way for the Lord by setting up for Mass, baptisms and funerals. Their work allows us all to pray our way through the liturgical seasons. We welcome Jennie and Margaret to the sacristan team this year. Thanks to Raylene Monteba for sharing in the care of the chapel. Also to the florist team and altar linen laundering team – the complementarity of all our work makes for a beautiful sanctuary for the Lord. May the Lord bless you for your work.

**RCIA/OCIA:** Rite of Christian Initiation in adults is a journey of learning and sharing about the beauty of the Catholic faith while fostering a spiritual life in the Lord. We learn about prayer, get inspired by the lives of the saints and reflect on the Sunday gospel. We learn about the liturgical year teach about Church doctrines and Catholic tradition.

We welcomed six people into the Catholic Church through the last RCIA process and are delighted to see them participating in parish life.

We are about to begin again for 2018 and have four enquirers at this stage. Please keep them in your prayers.

**CATHOLICS RETURNING HOME PROGRAMME** – in August we accompanied four people in exploring a return to their Catholic faith and continue to support their journey.

**PASTORAL VISITATION TEAM:** With Mary and “The Visitation” as our model, we try to bring the Lord to people through our pastoral care visit.

A team of eight volunteers bring a warm welcome from the parish:  
to see how you are: is there anything we, as a parish, can do for you;  
to update your contact details;  
to give you an information pack about the parish activities;  
to seek your feedback on the parish.

We have made contact with close to 600 households since it began in 2016 (53% of the parish roll) and have had some good outcomes. We have lots of work to do. If you enjoy visiting and would like to join the team, please contact Lauren.

**REDISCOVER JESUS:** We gave away 650 free ‘Rediscover Jesus’ books from Dynamic Catholic at Christmas in 2017 and followed up with a successful book study in Lent. This book made an impact and I continue to encourage all to read it.

**ST THERESE 33 DAYS TO MERCIFUL LOVE RETREAT:** We have a statue of St Therese on mission in our parish from the Carmelite Monastery during this retreat. This book retreat by Michael Gaitley is continuing with 22 participating in small group meetings and a further 15 doing the retreat at home. We will finish by making an optional consecration on the eve of St Therese's feast day. St Therese – pray for us.

**SEASONS FOR GROWTH - CUPPA & CARE GROUP:** The diocese has recently trained six new SFG Companions (including 3 people from Papanui parish) who will deliver the ‘Seasons for Growth’ course in the parishes for those who are experiencing grief from loss in various ways. We are running a Papanui parish course in October. Growing from the course delivered in 2017 was an opportunity to continue to meet monthly we pray for our loved ones and support each other in a friendly environment. This group continues to meet monthly.

*Lauren Butler*

## ST VINCENT DE PAUL CONFERENCE REPORT

This year to date we have responded to 323 calls for help from families in need in our parish.

In addition, we make other visits to deliver bread or offer companionship. We have a team of twelve members who undertake to respond to families in need.

We do this through the help of parishioners who contribute food to the parish food bank, donations from parishioners, from funds donated through the poor box and through the help of a trust set up by deceased parishioner Mr Bill Bowbanks.

In the year to 30<sup>th</sup> June our total expenditure was \$19,118.36 which was spent to help those less well off in our parish. The largest expense was food \$12,854.68 and we also spent money on school uniforms, electricity, school fees and supporting our St Vincent de Paul Conference in Sri Lanka.

Thank you to everyone who helps and contributes to our efforts through the food baskets and the poor box. Please pray for us

*George Varghese*

## CHRISTIAN LIFE COMMUNITY (CLC)

Nine people, who formed a Christian Life Community (CLC) as a follow-up to the 2015 Retreat in Daily Life continue to commit themselves, if possible, to pray daily and to meet on the first and third Wednesdays of each month. Two members remain in contact with our CLC group but do not attend due to health reasons. This year we are celebrating our third year anniversary with Mass and a shared meal. At meetings, we follow a simple pattern of sharing our experience of Jesus, scripture reflection and prayer to support one another to enter more deeply into silence so we learn to discover God in all things. Between meetings, members pray and reflect on sections in *The Call to Discernment in Troubled Time: New Perspectives on the Transformative Wisdom of Ignatius Loyola* by Dean Brackley. Founded by St Ignatius and one of the oldest existing lay groups in the Church, CLC focuses on Ignatian prayer, community and mission.

From the CLC International Website:

*“The charism and spirituality of CLC are Ignatian. Thus, the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius are both the specific source of our charism and the characteristic instrument of CLC spirituality. The CLC way of life is shaped by the features of Ignatian Christology: austere and simple, in solidarity with the poor and the outcasts of society, integrating contemplation and action, in all things living lives of love and service within the Church, always in a spirit of discernment.”*

*Kathleen Rushton RSM*

## CHILDREN’S LITURGY REPORT

Led by a committed, creative and enthusiastic team of leaders Children’s Liturgy continues in the Parish. The number of children attending fluctuates although we seem to be experiencing a little rise at the moment. It is for the 4 year old to First Holy Communion age where they can participate in song, prayer and individual activities targeted at their own level.

The children were presented with the Cross of the Good Shepherd this year which they carry out to their liturgy with the congregation singing “Come Create a New Heart in Me”. The focus of Jesus our Good Shepherd is reinforced every week.

Our team of 7 leaders are truly dedicated and with support from Year 8 helpers from St Joseph’s we are in good shape.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to Children’s Liturgy over the last twelve months.

*Katie Stewart*

## **CHOIR REPORT**

I was appointed Director of Music for St Joseph's Papanui in July 2017. As a result, I became the new director of a newly constituted parish choir. We officially began our work on the Feast of the Assumption 2017. After a membership drive, we now have 25 regular singers, rehearse weekly on Tuesday evenings, sing fortnightly at parish Masses along with singing at sacramental Masses, on feast days, at midnight Mass and the Easter Triduum. Our parish choir is a dedicated group who sees the importance of providing quality sacred music to assist our parish in lifting our hearts and minds heavenward. Alongside my own choral leadership, Michael Zon is our choir accompanist and Irene Maguire and Miriam Spragg are our choir librarians. We always precede and conclude our rehearsals in spoken and sung prayer, and offer supper in the parish centre to assist in building up this group socially. Our choir has taken part in wider choral events in the diocese, notably at the visit of UK Catholic composer Sir James MacMillan in July 2017, at the final Ablaze Mass in November and at the choral festival in August this year. All of these events took place at St Mary's Pro-Cathedral.

My approach is to ensure the choir deepens its knowledge of the Catholic choral tradition. As a result, it now sings much more unaccompanied music, is being developed in its vocal technique and rehearses for an hour and a half each week. We have broadened the repertoire of hymns being sung by the parish and have introduced a new setting of the Mass and a sung Our Father. I welcome all suggestions for music to be sung at Mass and am pleased to discuss sacred music matters with anyone in the parish who wishes to do so.

In October 2017 after 13 years of service, Nicholas Collins concluded his time as organist at the 6.00pm vigil Mass. This caused the St Gregory's choir to conclude its service as he accompanied that group. He also looked after our PowerPoint production. I became the regular organist at that Mass. In August 2018, after 18 years of service to the parish, Grant Bartley ceased being organist at the Sunday 5.00pm Mass. Nicholas no longer lives in or near the parish and Grant is on long-term leave due to upcoming work commitments. I have also picked up that Mass. Our organ scholar, Jose O'Sullivan left the parish at the end of last year to test his vocation in our national seminary. I am about to begin training a new organ scholar for our parish to develop our musical skill base and share the workload and commitment. We are also moving to a new PowerPoint system which will reduce the time required to prepare for four Masses each week.

As Director of Music, I thank our choir and organists, our 10.00am music team and the Filipino choir, all of whom offer their time and talent in the service of Our Lord and of his faithful people.

*Ken Joblin*

## **CORNERSTONE FAITH & LIGHT REPORT**

It is with pleasure that I submit this report from Cornerstone Faith and Light Community.

Faith and Light is an ecumenical world wide organisation that supports the spiritual needs of the intellectual disabled, their families and friends.

Cornerstone meets on the fourth Sunday of the month in the parish centre at St Gregory's Church from midday to 3.00pm.

As a community we are 30 years old this year, and have been part of the parish for the majority of these years. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the parish for their faithful support of us. We feel very much part of the parish.

At our monthly meetings (fiestas) we have a time of prayer, share a meal, share news, celebrate and most of all build friendships, something that we all yearn for. We are always looking for new friends to come and be part of our community. We invite you to "come see". If you want to have a chat about this, please feel free to give me a ring on 021 339 039.

*Jos de Leijer*

## **PRAYER & REFLECTION GROUP**

For the Prayer & Reflection Group it has been another year of grace. Up to eleven meet for an hour after Mass on Wednesday mornings and start with the divine chaplet.

We pray for the dying, parish prayer helpline and other intentions. The scripture readings for the following Sunday are studied with the help of the Holy Spirit.

It is an hour treasured by all and everyone is welcome.

*Helen Grofski*

## CATHOLIC STALL

This parish initiative has had a very successful year with improved sales.

This year we have tried to have feature months such as family prayer which featured prayer books and items to make prayer tables. There is always new stock and gifts and cards for all occasions.

There are two issues: firstly it is a surprise as to how many parishioners are unaware of this facility and secondly we need to help to staff the stall. It takes about ten minutes before and after each Sunday Mass, once a month. If you can assist please talk to someone attending the stall.

Thank you to those who already serve, as I really appreciate your help.

*Helen Dooley*

## EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS TO THE SICK

We all know that taking part in the celebration of the Holy Mass is the most important part of our lives, when we come together to recognise Christ in our midst, in the community itself and in the word and sacrament.

For the sick and housebound this celebration is something they are unable to take part in, so it is the mission of the Church to minister to these people, for in doing so we are ministering to Christ.

We are fortunate to have a team of seventeen ministers who have the great privilege of taking Holy Communion to eighty parishioners who are unable to attend Mass due to age or infirmity. These include eight rest homes in our area. We also go to the Marralameda Community every Friday. We are blessed to have Sr Nau join our team this year.

The highlight of the year for these people is when Fr Thanh celebrates Mass once a week at the rest homes. The residents look forward to these Masses with great joy. Thank you Fr Thanh.

They also love to attend the Mass of the Anointing in Lent and Advent; where we help with transport and afternoon tea.

On behalf of the parish I would like to thank our ministers for their loyalty and dedication to serving the sick every week. Special thanks to Fr John for his love and support.

*Janette McKee*

## CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE REPORT

The Papanui branch of Catholic Women's League meet February to November, on the third Thursday of the month, at 1.30pm in the St Joseph's Parish Centre.

Our members are involved in all aspects of parish life.

We raise funds for the charities which we support, including St Peter's School in Samoa. We have just completed a very successful raffle.

We usually have a guest speaker at our meetings. This year these have included:

Fr John Adams sharing his experience as a volunteer in one of Mother Teresa's houses in India; parishioner, Helen Grofski, speaking of her pilgrimage to Fatima and other places of religious significance, Sister Nau, SMSM revealing facets of her life as a missionary.

On a lighter note we celebrated 'the royal wedding', with members bringing their wedding photos - such beautiful brides and handsome husbands. One member brought her wedding dress and we were entertained by a wedding celebrant.

We thank Fr John and Fr Thanh for their ongoing support.

In faith and service.

*Velma Maunsell*

## **DIVINE MERCY PRAYER GROUP**

We are a small group that meets every second Wednesday of the month in St Joseph's Parish Centre at 7.00pm.

Our objective is to pray St Faustina's Divine Mercy Chaplet, the rosary and other prayers for the sick and the dying.

I would like to thank Fr John for allowing us to use the parish centre and our devoted members who have supported us throughout the year.

For more information about this prayer group please ring Gerry Smith on 352 8655.

*Gerry Smith*

## **MARIAN GROUP REPORT**

This year we are under new leadership and are growing with five new members and especially welcome Sr Nau from the Marist Missionary Sisters, who is an inspiration with her spiritual input for us all. If you would like to join us you would be made very welcome.

We visit parishioners in their homes and in care. We also enjoyed a lovely retreat day at Villa Maria College Chapel. We help with hospitality at funerals in our parish. We arrange the liturgy for the Anointing Mass and help with transport where necessary and serve afternoon tea. We liaise with neighbouring churches, and with other groups in our parish living up to our commitment of our mission statement.

Fellowship and social activities are important, as we move forward.

A special thank you to Fr John and Fr Thanh for all their support during the year.

*Babette Casey*

## **COUNTING TEAMS**

The counting teams have continued to count the collection each week.

There are seven counting teams, comprising a team leader and up to five counters. Each team counts the collection on a roster basis - one week on, and then seven weeks until it's their team's turn again.

Thanks to all the team leaders and counters for their continued support.

There are several vacancies on the counting teams. If you are interested in helping, contact Wilma in the parish office or the writer on 027 222 3315. It takes less than an hour of your time every seven weeks!

*Mark Noonan*

## **GARDENING REPORT**

A small but dedicated group of parishioners has worked each week tidying up the grounds surrounding St Gregory's Church and the St Joseph's Parish Centre and presbytery and surrounding property and car parks areas.

The church property has been well looked after and maintained to ensure that we care for our surroundings. My thanks go out to the willing volunteers who carry out this work. During the year we have had a number of resignations within the group due to personal reasons and our call for additional support did not result in any new members or helpers.

We will carry on and maintain the property for this coming year and ask that other members of the parish be willing to assist us with this necessary work

*William MacManus*

## **PPRE**

The PPRE programme continues to run with a strong and consistent number of students attending regularly and many new students enrolling this year from parishes throughout the Christchurch area.

During 2017 the number of students attending the PPRE programme was averaging between 15 and 18 students each week. Many being families with more than one child attending. We also have had older siblings assisting us as part of their service for the Duke of Edinburgh award.

We continue to run end of term liturgies to allow all students to take part in some way as this is something they don't often have the opportunity to do. We continue to use art and craft as part of our teaching.

As each year comes to an end, we are aware of students who will be leaving us to continue their education within a Catholic school. With this in mind we are considering ways of advertising the programme to encourage parents to enrol their children sooner, so they can get more benefit from the programme over a longer period of time.

*Wendy James*

## **MARRALOMEDA CHARITABLE TRUST REPORT**

Marralomedas has had a busy year with a number of changes. I have been very privileged to take up the role of community leader and it has been a wonderful community to be included in. Our community members, staff and volunteers all have so many gifts to share with each other.

We have continued to be fortunate to have a very special relationship with St Joseph's Parish. The Stations of the Cross was enacted by community members on Good Friday during Holy Week. This was well attended by the parishioners and holds a very important place on the Marralomedas calendar.

We appreciate a number of parishioners who are involved in supporting Marralomedas, especially those who do so as volunteers in various roles with Holy Communion, trust members and volunteer staff. We are thankful for everything you do for Marralomedas and your love and support strengthens the lives of our community members.

Thank you for continuing to hold the Marralomedas Community in your thoughts and prayers.

*Karen Rickerby*