

Update from the St Joseph's planning group 12 October 2014

Our next parish meeting is planned for Sunday 19th October at St Gregory's Parish Centre after 10.00am Mass. We will provide the report that Marianne Daly has prepared following the two earlier meetings.

As announced at all Masses last weekend, we're starting to see some movement now towards the demolition of our much-loved St Joseph's Church.

In recent weeks the organ has been removed and is now in storage in Oamaru and, with the diocese, we are in the process of finalising a contract for the demolition of the church itself.

We will hold a formal Rite of Thanksgiving and farewell at St Joseph's Church on Sunday 2nd November at 2.00pm, the feast of All Souls. If the weather is poor this will be postponed to the following weekend. This will give us all a chance to gather formally to farewell the church.

We will also provide an opportunity for small groups to enter the church to make a personal farewell and pray for our friends and family with whom we've celebrated both happy and sad occasions in St Joseph's Church over the years. The visits will take place on Saturdays 8th and 15th November and Sundays 9th and 16th November. These visits will be strictly rostered in groups of no more than 5 and will last 10 minutes. Protective clothing will be provided and entry will be restricted to the wing of the church closest to the parish centre. People will be checked in and out. This conditional access has been agreed with Opus consultants, who provide engineering advice to the diocese.

Rosters for these visits will be available at the back of the church this weekend.

We will need volunteers to supervise the visits. Please put your details on the sheets if you can assist in this way.

Following the small group visits all pews and other furniture will be removed from the church. We expect to salvage a number of items including some windows, the crucifix, the ceiling panels of the evangelists, that altar, ambo and tabernacle and the stone memorials in the floor. We hope these may be able to be reused in our new church.

We expect that the demolition of the church will take place during the school holidays in January 2015.

... and so to our new church. We have written to Bishop Barry recommending a rebuild of a larger capacity church. Bishop Barry has sent our letter to the Diocesan Building and Sites Committee for advice. Once this diocesan process is resolved we can start thinking about the future in a more defined way.

We will continue to keep you informed through our parish newsletter and our website.

Graeme Wilson
for the St Joseph's Planning Group.