

**MINUTES OF PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL
HELD AT ST COLUMBA'S HALL ON
TUESDAY 7th JULY AT 4.30pm**

PRESENT: Fr William. Fr James. Carol Galvin. Pauline Rourke. Sue Carr. Francis Coxhead. Ann McCarthy. Amy O'Donnell. Anne Mosquera. Peter Devine. Tim Moore & Eileen Irwin
The meeting opened with a prayer.

APOLOGIES: Tom Coyle. Lawrence Hordley. Maura Connolly. Mike Maxwell.
Fr William acknowledged that some could not be with us today due to health and age issues but thanked them for their comments.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING & MATTERS ARISING: Ann & Pauline looked through the previous minutes and decided that due to the lockdown there were no matters arising and asked if the minutes could be taken as a true record. Pauline proposed this and Carol seconded it.

UPDATE SINCE THE LOCKDOWN: Fr William

I would like to welcome everyone to our PPC meeting this afternoon. Since the lockdown in March every parish activity came to a halt. For most of us it is the first time we haven't celebrated Easter. Today we thank God we are able to meet as a Council to touch base with what's has been happening during this unprecedented time and to remind ourselves some other things in our last meeting we were to action . I want to acknowledge that some Council members due to various reasons for instance health and age can't be here with us. I thank them for their comments and suggestions regarding risk assessment and also relating to the celebration of public mass.

Thank you once more for coming out to this meeting Fr. James and myself are sincerely grateful to you for your presence this afternoon.

I will now handover to our Chairperson to lead us in the meeting.

1. Pastoral ministry :- Sacrament of the sick - During the lockdown Fr. James and myself were called out to anoint our brothers and sisters in the Nursing Homes. We also went to minister in parishioners' homes. Apart from that people had called us to pray for other parishioners or relatives and those who have died both locally and abroad.

2. Funeral service- We had a good number of funeral services at the Crematorium and graveside. There was an opportunity to meet some parishioners on such occasions. I had to go to Wales for a funeral service with the help of a parishioner. Some parishioners were liaising with bereaved families and that was tremendous help to the priests. After the funeral service the priest got in touch with families to see how they getting on. The funeral of Denzel Gordon was a very emotional as a young man of 25yrs, a reader here in St. Columba's.

3. The Eucharist- We celebrate mass everyday for parishioners' intentions privately and on Sunday we go on to stream it to the wider parish and the media world. Friends from Scotland and London join us and always call me to thank Fr. James and myself for the mass. One said to me "Fr. William you need a haircut " which's very true. We also received thanks and words of encouragement from our own parishioners. Though some were commenting on social distancing between we the priests and other petty comments which of course we the priests had empathy on such people because they never sat in a Liturgy class. However, it's good to hear from parishioners. To this online business I would like to thank Fr. James, Tim Moore and Francis Coxhead for their unflinching support for the priests.

4. Contact with the church community- We had contact with parishioners through the phone. It is always a pleasant moments for the parishioners and the priest. Most people were looking forward to the reopening of the church for celebrating the Eucharist, sacraments and socialisation in the hall. Some updated us on their health and support they receive from their families and parishioners regarding shopping and getting medication. It wasn't a one way traffic, most people call to find how we were doing during this lockdown the lockdown. We sincerely thank them for their concern for us. Some brought us food items and books to

keep occupied which we highly appreciate. I want also to acknowledge that some individual parishioners took it upon themselves to check on other parishioners especially those living alone and vulnerable. I say well done! The parish contact list has been updated to reflect the present composition of the churches. Thanks to Anne Mosquera, Anthony Mosquera and Catherine Green. We will need to hold on to data protection Act as we all know the implications in dealing with people information.

5. Collection- Parishioners are still faithful in bringing their Sunday offering through the presbytery door and friends. Some have made standing orders. I thank them and encourage those who haven't done that.

6. Re-opening of Church for private prayer and public masses - It is almost a week since we opened the church for private prayer. The priests had two meetings with volunteers from our two churches in which we had training together and the churches were laid out for easy access and to make sure that there's free flow of people coming in and out of church. The parish purchased PPE equipment and have adhered to Diocesan guidelines and that of the Government. The risks assessment was sent to the Diocesan Health and Safety Officer for approval to the Vicar General before we started the reopening of the churches. We have sent the second risks assessment to Diocese for celebrating public masses and it has also been approved. During the private prayer the priest exposed the Blessed Sacrament. So far we have gotten a number of people attending and we are pretty sure the number will eventually increase. To bring in order and decorum we have kindly ask people who wish to attend Sunday masses to register. The priests are aware of the inconveniences it might cause but dear Brothers and sister we have to start from somewhere and build on it through constructive suggestions from you our parishioners. In all this we are looking for the safety of everyone coming into our place of worship.

7. Website - Work on Parish website is in progress and Francis Coxhead and Fr. James are busy trying to come with something that will be up to standard. Do you want to update the Council brothers? The Facebook is up and running. These items will be great tool for evangelisation.

8. Challenges - In what ways can the Council support the Parish clergy in their pastoral ministry? - As the lockdown is easing, how can we reach out to people who don't use or have access to the electronic media in other words social media? - Communication - how can we sustain communication within our Pastoral Council meeting? Like e-mailing, headings like dear all? I would like Fr. James to throw more light on it. - What's the right protocol to follow when addressing an issue which involve the entire parish?

9. Conclusion :- My dear Brothers and sisters we the clergy will like to thank you for support especially coming to this meeting at this extraordinary time when others can't come out either due to ill- health or age. I want to assure you that we Spiritans taking over the administration of the parish since September 2019 are ready to work with you to build the sense of community where people feel they belong. In doing that, there are bound to be changes that might upset, annoy others but as we all know "change " is constant. It will be done in good faith and for the common good of the parish.

10. Thanks, is there any clarifications or questions?

If anyone has anything to discuss after the meeting please e mail the parish secretaries and ask for it to be put on the next Agenda or contact the Parish priest if it is urgent.

E mails only need to be sent to the person/persons concerned and not to everyone on the mailing list. The Communications Group is working hard to set up a new parish web site. The old one will run alongside. It is a long job and more will be added as we go along. A Domain name has been purchased. Thank you for the work that has gone into this so far.

In an attempt to get copies of the newsletter to anyone who does not have access to e mail or the internet, it was asked if there was anyone we know in this category to either print and drop one off for them or let the parish secretaries know and they can see that a newsletter is sent to them.

Both churches will be open for Mass this weekend. If more volunteers were available Mass could be held every day.

Both priests appreciate all that is done in the parish and would like to assure everyone that anything they do is in have the best interests and safety of parishioners.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING: the next meeting is on Wednesday 9th September at 4.30pm in St Columba's Hall. One of the reasons for this is that the meeting room has to be well ventilated and the earlier start will benefit all who attend.

I apologise if you feel that these minutes are not a full account but it was very difficult to hear at times.