

**St Mary's Parish, Mt Albert  
Meeting of the Parish Pastoral Council**

**Date:** Wednesday 2 November 2022  
**Location:** Presbytery meeting room  
**Time:** 7:00pm

**Attendees:** Fr. Carlo Cruz, David Wood, Dianne McArdle, Sr. Marie Therese, Clara Fernandes, Paul Marshall, Phil Marshall, Ramona Cobb, and Richard Perillo

**Apologies:** Amy Smith and Rick Mumford

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**1. Welcome / prayer**

The meeting started at 7:00pm with a prayer led by Fr. Carlo.

**2. Confirmation of previous minutes / matters arising**

The previous minutes were confirmed by David upon motion by Paul and as seconded by Sr. Marie there being no corrections.

There were no matters arising from the last minutes.

**3. Chairperson Report**

According to David, fortnightly meetings with him, Fr Carlo and the office staff are set mainly to keep things going with the carpet, working bee, and general matters that need to be dealt with on a week-to-week basis.

**4. Correspondence arising**

Fr Carlo reported that correspondence from the Diocese had been received stating Mass count is happening for the whole month of November. Official sheet will be provided. Consequently, there is a need to assign people to do the Mass count starting this coming Sunday.

On the other hand, David mentioned having received correspondence from Joe Brownfield, the details of which will be discussed in the general business.

**5. Update from Finance & Property Committee**

For the Property Committee, Dianne thanked those who turned up in the working bee. Meanwhile, the carpet people and the type of carpet had been selected by the committee, but still awaiting the approval from the Diocese hopefully within its November meeting. Regarding the door handle on school side, Diane said that her friend is trying to source something that will match its colour and fit. Likewise, her friend is also sourcing some bricks to replace the broken ones in front of the Church due to wear and tear. The

Stations of the Cross booklets had been damaged overtime which also need to be repaired. Dianne further added that the gardens are looking very nice.

In the month of October, the Finance Committee reported an income of \$5,918.00, while expenditure amounted to \$10,784.00 due to several repairs and maintenance on the roof. Dianne then highlighted that about \$700.00 and close to \$600.00 had been received as donations through the Tap and Go for September and October, respectively. Further, the committee needs to think about next year's gifting because it costs quite a lot (between \$400.00 to \$500.00 last year) to have envelopes printed and sent from Australia. Thus, it is necessary to make sure that the envelope system is utilised efficiently. Lastly, the Finance Committee will soon be having its pre-Christmas meeting.

David asked Dianne whether the roof costings came out from the general fund to which Dianne replied that the committee had moved funds into the repairs and maintenance account. At present, the funds are quite low so that when the recarpeting works will be made, the committee will be looking to move funds from the bequest made by a dying parishioner a few years ago.

Fr Carlo suggested to regularly put the monthly income and expense in the newsletter. This has been done in the past but not consistently. This will help parishioners to know what the Parish is getting and spending and perhaps will encourage generous people to give more. David agreed and Dianne will be reminding Johanna about this.

## **6. Update from Caring Committee**

As for the Caring Committee, Dianne reported the following:

- 139 parcels went out in October feeding 342 people;
- Gathered household items for the Tongan community;
- Continued to visit the hospitals and rest homes;
- Provided transport to hospitals for a couple of people who have cancer for their treatment;
- Extended housework, cleaning and provided some items for a disabled man.

Dianne expressed her thanks to the Marist primary school who put out a call and had a great response to help replenish the food bank as well as to the Marist College for doing some cooking. She also requested Ramona to ask the school if they have a list of people that might have need Christmas gifts from the Parish.

## **7. Update from Liturgy Committee**

Phil reported that the Liturgy Committee met on 11 October and shared the following matters in their minutes:

- Altar Server and Ministers of the Word Training had been conducted.
- There are 3 RCIA candidates.
- For correspondence, the Liturgy Magazine has been received. Anyone interested in seeing that may talk to Fr Carlo.

- Covid guidelines are being reviewed for each meeting. No chalice at this stage but Holy Water has been brought back this month based on feedback.
- A Parish Rosary by the end of the month has been discussed. The idea being to pray the Rosary in front of the statue of Our Lady in front of the Church at 9:30am prior to the 10am Mass. According to Fr Carlo, this was started last Sunday, but because of the weather, it was held instead inside the Church near the statue of the Blessed Mother.
- Preparations for the All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day have been worked upon. The Memorial Book will be placed in the Altar so that the congregation can put on the names of the deceased whom they want to be remembered. There will be a lighting of the candles during the Mass on 6 November.
- The Sacramental Programme has been looked upon. The coordination between the children and the Church was discussed. It was determined that after the class, the best thing would be that the children return to their parents for the whole Mass. That will bring the family members together. The teachers will be responsible for the Sacramental Programme, while the parents will be responsible for the Mass. Based on the feedback by Dianne, it was suggested to make sure to coordinate the Mass with the Sacramental Programme such that the children will be brought to the door of the Church and make arrangements from there for them to go to their parents.
- The Parish Christmas Celebration is planned to be held on 11 December (Sunday) in the Marist Hall. There are 2 things to celebrate: Christmas and Fr Carlo's 12 years of ordination. Upon clarification by David, Phil said that it is not the Mass but only the celebration will be held inside the Marist School Hall after the 10am Mass.
- The arrangement of the seats has been discussed. The committee is aware that there are some strong feelings in terms of the configuration of the Church and there is a need to be careful and to respect people's particular preferences. However, there was a suggestion that after the carpet is done, the pews will be put on a slight angle. Phil suggested trying at 5 degrees angle per week - either 5 degrees one way or 5 degrees the other way, and to see what happens. David commented having got a lot of feedback from people who would rather be focused on the Altar rather than straight down so that it would be interesting to try out the suggestion of slightly tilting the seats as a compromise.
- Phil reported that the Parish anniversary was a success. He thanked everyone who helped to make that a great event. He noted that the morning tea at the back of the Church was awesome. As such, this is going to continue and hopefully, the Parish could keep the momentum with that as it builds the community.

David asked Phil that in the event of the new carpet, to give consideration whether to keep the candles or to go for the LED electronic ones as wax does not look good on new carpets. Fr Carlo commented that if done well, putting foil on candles will prevent any wax from dripping on the carpet. Meanwhile, Dianne added that it would also be a hazard if someone would put some candles around the base of the Blessed Mother's statue inside the Church. Phil noted the said comments and suggestions and will relay it to the committee.

## **8. Update from Marist Primary**

On behalf of Amy, Ramona reported that the school had a PTFA meeting last night. The meal numbers are down in the freezer, but the school has got enough to last this term for the Marist family who needs it. There was a discussion on whether to do another meal drive, which was decided in the affirmative, not for the school but for the Parish. The push will be coming up in three weeks' time. So, in Weeks 5 and 6, the food containers will be handed out for the Parish freezer meal drive.

Garden to Table seedling sale will be held tomorrow, before and after school at 8:30am and 3pm. Everyone is welcome.

Lastly, the Marist primary school would like to say a big thank you to Fr Carlo for his club and hub visits. The children absolutely loved his stories. His connection to the school is so essential and necessary which draws the children even closer to their faith. So, a huge thank you goes out to Fr Carlo from Marist school.

## **9. Update from safeguarding**

Fr Carlo reported that he is still in the planning stage of meeting all the people who could help in the safeguarding. He then shared that 2 weeks ago, he saw 2 cars parked whose passenger were helping themselves in the garage. At first, Fr Carlo just smiled at them thinking that maybe someone gave them permission to go in there. However, the same people returned again the following day. This time, Fr Carlo talked to them. It turned out that the people were from "Food Not Bombs". They said that they were referred to come over and they thought that it was ok to do it. Apparently, Fr Carlo was never made aware of them. According to Dianne, "Food Not Bombs" is a local vegan community who have cooked meals for the Parish for 2 or 3 years now and they put meals on the outside freezer. Fr Carlo expressed his concern that people will just be going on to one's garage and help themselves in there regardless of whether they are helping or not. The garage after all is not a public property. Dianne suggested to improve the communication so that they could let either her or Fr Carlo to know when they are coming. Fr Carlo said that he already talked to them who then told him that they will be texting. Fr Carlo's main concern is that he lives in the place and yet he does not know what is happening. Further, Fr Carlo shared that one time, there was a woman that parked herself in the garage after the Sunday Mass. The woman claimed that she was sent away by her landlord. Fr Carlo gave her food. However, the following weekend, the same woman parked again in the garage. Fr Carlo eventually told her that she cannot park there as it is a private property. Fr Carlo expressed that with what is happening right now, he should be guarding himself as well. At the end of the day, Fr Carlo is all alone by himself there. David noted that what was shared by Fr Carlo is a valid point and thus suggested the need for a feasible barrier or gate off the house. A chain, as suggested by Dianne, would not be enough as people could just walk over to it, said David. Accordingly, this matter will be considered by the property and safeguarding committees.

## **10. Update from Parish Priest**

As earlier pointed out Fr. Carlo, Mass Count will start this coming weekend. Candle Mass will happen in all Masses to remember our departed brothers and sisters. RCIA has been started last Saturday with Ramona and Cathy. Supposedly, there were 4 but only 3 came probably due to the weather.

There were 4 new Ministers of the Word who were commissioned on 23 October. They will immediately be rostered hopefully this month. Children's Liturgy has already started which in the meantime is scheduled every last Sunday of the month until there will be extra people who could help out.

Fr Carlo really wanted people to be involved in the Ministry so if time would permit, he will be gathering all the teachers so that they could help in the Sacramental Programme, Liturgy for Children, Baptismal Preparation, and RCIA. The same is true with all the health practitioners and policemen in the community who could help with safeguarding. Not everyone will be here forever. All are dispensable so it is but right to look at how the Parish will run in the future.

Fr Carlo will be on a Retreat from 6 to 11 November, during which Sr Lorraine and her team will organize the Liturgy.

## **11. General Business**

David shared an email coming from Joe Brownfield of the Youth Group which stated that "Thanks for the chat a couple of weeks ago. Feel free to share this with PPC and Father. As discussed, I have had a change of heart re the Fund Raising for the Youth Mass. I do not enjoy asking people to donate their money especially right after Covid has affected so many nor do I want to spend my time doing so. I strongly feel with the Church once it is financially able to support the Youth Mass and any other youth initiatives along with the volunteers who put their hands up to lead them. I do not think it is fair to expect those volunteers to also fundraise for those groups or any others. As such, please disregard my previous emails drafted re the Go Fund Me." David thanked Joe and replied among others that "I wholeheartedly agree with your statements. The groups like the Youth require at least 2 active administrators and it is something that we will give serious consideration to when the time comes to re-establish it. As far as the finances are concerned, although I am not involved in the finance side of the Parish, I think it is very strained at the moment. Hopefully by early next year once we completed the roof repairs and the recarpeting, the Finance Committee will re-evaluate the financial position of the Parish and make some plans for going forward. But at this point in time there is no spare money. Once again, thanks."

According to David, this also sort of emphasizes what Fr Carlo was saying about building up a network of people within the Parish and the group cannot rely on just one person doing the Youth. It used to be Joe and Johanna. Johanna left and Joe was left doing it. It is a big of a responsibility for one person to do it. So, it would be good to look at people with whom the group could network, and which could assist with various roles within the Parish. There are a lot of people out there who are "Sunday Catholics" but when you tap them on their shoulder, they are quite often happy to get involved. So perhaps the group could give some consideration to this and look at people who may have young kids or even those not so young anymore who want to get involved in activating the Youth Group. The Youth Group within any Parish is a vital part and good for it. Hopefully, the group could revisit this again next year, reengage with them and get the youth up and running. Fr Carlo responded that he has never seen the Youth Group being operated in the Parish. In fact, when he arrived the Youth Group is almost in their "dying stage". What Fr Carlo appreciated from Joe was that he wanted to keep it alive by leading the music. Having been to different Parishes, Fr Carlo noted that they always have a budget for the Youth Ministry. So, it would be good to ask other Parishes (ex. Takapuna) how much the youth is being supported financially. David said that he wholeheartedly agrees on supporting the youth, but it depends on the financial situation of the Parish like in the

last 3 months, the Parish have been running in the negative. Thus, there is a need to balance the box first. Fr Carlo asked if previously, the Youth Group had been supported financially. Dianne responded that the youth had a separate account where funds were put into. They did run a fund-raising activity when they first started, and they bought needed items (ie. chairs, furniture). Thus, it had been funded in the past, but Covid happened and financially the Parish has taken a real hit. Dianne has talked to Joe himself who said that he totally understands the pressure that the Parish is under. The willingness of the Parish to support them is there but there must first be financial stability. This certainly should be discussed in the Finance meeting.

David also added that next year would be good to try to get and build more relationship with the College. In this regard, David asked Fr if he regularly visits the College. Fr Carlo responded that what the College is requiring of him now is just doing Masses for them. David said that there used to be a good conduit between the Parish and the College. David feels that the College is quite a good platform to try and get reenergize the youth within the Parish, so he will try to get to touch base with the College Principal, Rochelle, and see if she has got any people who may be interested in being a conduit between the Parish and the College. Dianne commented that the Caring Committee has a contact with the College. In fact, the College counsellor is in regular contact with the committee when they have families in need. There is an ongoing support from the Parish to the College as well, so Dianne is sure that it will be welcomed when the Parish would make an approach. Dianne also illustrated how important it is for Ramona or Amy to put that connection between the community.

David suggested to have an end-of-the-year combined meeting next month with the Liturgy Committee. Phil and Fr Carlo agreed. It would not only be a meeting but more of getting to know each other and share a plate. David asked for a tentative day for it to which Fr Carlo suggested a Wednesday. Phil will inform the Liturgy Committee and will coordinate with David accordingly.

Lastly, David asked the group to consider what the members want for the PPC next year (i.e., aspirations, where it should be going, how it can improve). This will give each member ample time to have a plan before the next year's first meeting as to how to make things better.

## **12. Next meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 7 December 2022.

## **13. Closing prayer**

The meeting closed at 7:56pm with a closing prayer led by Fr. Carlo.