

Our Lady of the Valleys Parish



Annual Report
2017

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Agenda For Annual General Meeting

6th August 2017 2:00pm

Pettit Centre Heretaunga

- † Welcome
- † Opening Prayer
- † Present / Apologies
- † Tabling / Acceptance of the Annual Reports
(including Annual Financial Returns)
 - Matters Arising from Annual Report
- † Elections of New Parish Councillors
- † General Business
- † Closing Prayer
- † Afternoon Tea

Parish Council 2016-17



The Parish council has been meeting once a month over the last year. The following is a summary of the work of your Parish council.

In April 2016 a Stewardship weekend was held in Upper Hutt, this was well attended by the council and parishioners. The main themes from this workshop have been added to our Pastoral Plan which Susan Kelly has been working on, on behalf of the Parish Council. For which we are very grateful, this is a living document which is useful for helping set the direction of our united parish.

May 2016 brought the first meeting of our newly formed Youth group took place. Barbara Aukusitino and John Benvenuti, were fundamental in forming this group as a “sub group” of the Parish Council. Following the formation Barbara has involved other youth members to assist her in the running of this group. In October some members attended “the Life Fest Youth Event”, which was held in Auckland. The group then gave a very enthusiastic report back to the Parish at all Masses. In November a video was made by the group and shown after each Mass. In February 2017 the group arranged games for the children and youth at the Parish picnic.

In June three parishioners were presented with the Pope’s Benemerenti medals, these were Pat Hewson, Gordon and Linda Holmes. These medals were presented at a special Mass, followed by a morning tea.

We were advised that Parishes were required to arrange Sunday Mass times to allow each Parish Priest to be able to say all the Masses within their parishes. It was decided that the parish should be consulted in this process. Therefore, a voting strategy was formulated. Voting took place mid June 2016, Susan Kelly and John O’Malley were instrumental in forming the voting and analysing system, for which we were very grateful. The Council has spent a considerable amount of time and prayerful soul searching considering this issue. After taking into account the voting, and feedback, along with the requirements of our Parish and after consulting with the Liturgy committee, the new Mass times were set at 5:30pm Sat and 8:30am and 10:30am Sunday.

Josephine Eynon has been nominated and granted a Benemerenti medal, it has been planned that this will be presented at a special Mass in July.

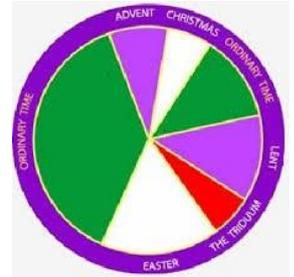
An Archdiocesan Synod is planned for September 2017, and our Parish was invited to forward nominations for six parishioners to attend, and from a cross section of suggested attendees parish delegates were selected and their names forwarded to the Archbishop’s Office. Within the parish meeting were arranged to discuss various topics for feedback to the Archdiocese.

In addition to these specific activities the long term ongoing work of the Council include information sharing on The Euthanasia issue; updating the Parish Mission Statement and Parish Pastoral plan, investigating a redesigned Parish webpage and logo; promoting Parish social activities; and looking to undertake fund raising and community building events;

Chris Henley

Chairperson,
Parish Council

Liturgy Committee Report 2016-17



Fellow Parishioners,

The Liturgy group is a fellowship of devoted persons who in supporting the parish priest bringing to life the various liturgical activities that are essential to our spiritual life. It is the "engine room" where individual creativity and joint hard work come together to provide visual, musical, and related activities for parishioners to participate in, thereby contributing to parishioner's spiritual experiences.

Four parishioners, who have over a long time made a substantial contribution to liturgical activities were awarded the Benemerenti Medal; Gordon and Linda Holmes, Pat Hewson, and Josephine Eynon.

The main liturgical events of our church are, Easter, Christmas and to a lesser extent Pentecost. These events draw heavily on limited resources of time, energy and finance on those who voluntarily undertake a substantial variety of tasks. We are a parish of two church's and every attempt is made to preserve as much as possible local theologies and their expression within each church while at the same time recognising that for major liturgical events we are required to come together as one parish, in one location. In this regard, every attempt is made to allocate the liturgical events in an equitable manner, between each Church.

A range of tasks performed are: -

- Sunday Masses, and the ministries that are integral to them; leaders, readers, altar servers, greeters, sacristans, ministers of Communion, and the all-important music groups and choirs.
- Behind these ministries lies training and development programmes to support those involved. The surveying of the parish in search of those persons interested in joining these ministries.
- Ash Wednesday, the second Rite of reconciliation, and lent. Easter Triduum of Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter vigil and Easter Sunday. Pentecost a spiritual and colourful event. Advent preparation, Christmas with the generation of a family celebration, carol services and the Jesse tree for each church.
- Supporting the sacramental programmes, of first Holy Communion and Confirmation.
- Aided in finalisation of Sunday and weekday mass times.
- Contributed to, All Saints' Day, All Souls' Day, Closing of the Door of Mercy, Mission Sunday, Mother Aubert celebration.
- The altar and church decoration for each liturgical season.

May I take this opportunity in thanking all those parishioners who have generously contributed their time, talent and treasure to our liturgical events. We are always open to anybody who would like to join us in delivering these important church activities. You would be most welcome.

John D O'Malley,

**Chair
Liturgy Committee**

Finance Committee 2016-2017



The Finance committee comprising Chairman Roger Wasson, Treasurer Alan Thom, Minute Secretary Marilyn Keating and members Terry O'Brien, Colin Braddock Margaret Lanigan, Debby Morgan and Fr Tony Kearns are charged with the responsibility to ensure that Our Lady of the Valleys Parish is adequately funded in terms of facilities and staff. It also supports the pastoral work of the Parish working closely with the Parish Council to provide financial information and advice as well as safeguarding Parish assets.

Throughout the last financial year the Committee have undertaken and completed a number of maintenance issues at the Pettit Centre, Our Lady of Grace Church and grounds and St Francis Xavier Church. Currently still under review is the maintenance required at the Marae Hall and Scout Hall in Stokes Valley.

The Parish has one part-time paid groundsman and one part-time secretary for whom contracts have been approved by the Committee to bring them into line with current legislation and the guidelines of the Archdiocese. This included a much needed update to the Health & Safety regulations of any persons employed by the Parish.

We wish to acknowledge the work and leadership of Tim Peirce during his tenure on the Finance Committee and especially his role during the challenging time of the earthquake strengthening of Our Lady of Grace Church. Tim also served as the Chairperson of the Committee.

Sadly Margaret Lanigan retired from the committee in May this year after serving on the Finance Committee at St Francis Xavier Parish for over 25 years and latterly on the combined Our Lady of the Valleys Parish. Margaret's support and historical knowledge has been invaluable to the committee, we wish her well.

The Parish's financial year runs from 1 April to 31st March the following year.

Highlights from the Annual Accounts include

(Excess of Expenditure over Income)	(130,426)
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This Loss includes a non-cash charge for Depreciation on Fixed Assets of \$137,437 for the year

Net Cash Inflows/(Outflows)	(38,082)
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Nett Assets	4,999,596
This is total assets owned by the Parish less the amount of liabilities owed by the Parish	
CDF Loan	87,079
This is remaining balance outstanding that was borrowed to cover the cost of refurbishing the Presbytery at Heretaunga and earthquake strengthening of Our Lady of Grace Church	
Total Funds gifted by Parishioners	154,205
Insurance Costs	14,049
Archdiocesan Levies	18,830
These provide funding to the Archdiocese of Wellington to cover costs of running the Archdiocese	
Clergy Support	46,351
This is the amount the Parish pays to support the Clergy of the Archdiocese both those in active ministry and those who have retired from active ministry	
CDF Loan repayments made	40,392
Interest Paid on CDF Loan	5,347

Roger Wasson

**Chairman
Finance Committee**

Catholic Women's League 2016-17



Heretaunga Catholic Women's continues to be a strong, positive group with membership at thirty-six, which includes four life members. Although we've experienced sadness with the death of two of our long-serving members, Eileen Hall and Mary Strange, we've also had the pleasure of welcoming four new women to our group.

Each year we raise money for our national appeal. This year's "At Home Appeal" is Pillars. This organisation supports families of prisoners as children are nine times more likely to get into strife if they have a parent in prison.

Our Mission Station at Ra in Fiji continues to receive our support. For the past five years we have been helping pay the fees for a student nurse's tuition after the hospital at Ra, run by the Sisters of Our Lady of Nazareth, had to close due to the lack of any trained staff.

Recently we sent a cheque to Father Julian Wagg at Sacred Heart Parish in Kaikoura after their devastating earthquake. He's aware of families that are struggling and would appreciate some financial support.

We are conscious of needs locally as well as nationally. We have supported the Upper Hutt Housing Trust, with their ongoing fight for affordable housing and the Upper Hutt Community Trust. Paul from the UHCC spoke at one of our meetings last year and we were impressed by his commitment to helping at-risk young people in Upper Hutt.

Our commitment to St Brendan's School is ongoing as we understand there will always be some families struggling to meet their financial demands.

As a good bit of time and energy goes into fundraising, earlier this year we decided to take our ladies on an outing paid for by our Branch. We invited a few parishioners to join us too. We hired a bus to take us to Days Bay Pavilion for afternoon tea. In spite of the unpleasant weather it was a great success, with all agreeing we'll have to do it again!

One of the simplest occasions we organise is the 5th Wednesday of the month coffee morning held at a local cafe. It is another opportunity to get together without the fuss or planning and is open to all parishioners. We just advertise the time and place! Another 5th of the month is 5th Sundays when we take a turn to run the cafe after the 10.30am Mass at the Pettit Centre

On a few Sundays during the winter months we've decided to offer soup and rolls at the cafe. Any donations will go to parish funds.

Chris Wasson

President

Filipino Community



At the Our Lady of the Valleys Parish, we are often referred to as the Filipino Community. As there is no other Filipino group in the Parish, we are happy to represent the wider Filipino community in Wellington.

We are a small group of families meeting regularly to pray, listen to each other's stories and provide support in whatever way we can. We have been doing this for nearly ten years. We believe that what binds us primarily is our faith and the common experiences of migrating to New Zealand. We treat each other as our family here in New Zealand - we have seen our children and ourselves grow together through these years. Recently, after some prayer and discernment we decided to model our way of life according to the example of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. From our special devotion to the Holy Family, we gave our group the name *The Community for the Holy Family*.

The community activities include community prayer happening twice a month. This takes the form of reading the psalms, reflecting on the Sunday Gospel reading, sharing one's experiences of God's Word for the past few days and praying the devotional prayers of the 'The Family Prayer' and the 'Prayer of Husband & Wife.' We also have annual Lenten retreat and celebrate the Holy Family Sunday as our own community feast day.

Despite personal difficulties, we endeavour to be aware of the social issues around us. The community provides financial support to an indigent student in the Philippines, paying for his education in a private school in Cavite, Philippines. And the one the community currently supports is the second student we have given our commitment to. Also recently, we have responded to the call of Cardinal John Dew and committed to coordinating with Caritas and to providing some support to the newly-arrived refugees in Wellington.

We believe that our minor ministry of being the choir at the Our Lady of Grace Church every fourth Sunday helps deepen our relationship with God and with each other. We are grateful to be given this opportunity to serve the Church. We are equally grateful to be allowed to use the Pettit Centre for our prayers and practices.

We are open to anyone who like to pray, serve and sing with us. We hope that more families, Filipinos or not, join our small community.

John Domdom

Leader

Passionist Family Groups



Passionist Family Groups started in the two former parishes of Our Lady of Grace Parish in Heretaunga and St Francis Xavier Parish in Stokes Valley in the early 1990s.

Although some of the original groups amalgamated or were disestablished the movement has endured through the amalgamation process as we have become Our Lady of the Valleys Parish. Indeed since that amalgamation two new groups have been started, so we now have six groups that meet monthly or bi-monthly.

Family groups are a great asset to our Parish, creating networks where people get to know each other through a variety of activities. The most popular ones seem to involve food – picnics, barbeques, shared meals, cafes, movies, walks, games, quiz nights, high teas, and house Masses. As friendships grow, people find that they want to support each other's joys and sorrows and so the Church community is built up.

It is through care and friendship that feelings of belonging and mate-ship develop. Many groups have members with non-Catholic partners who are often the most keen and supportive. You get from Family Groups what you put into them.

As your Parish Co-ordinators, as well as the co-ordinators for the Hutt Valley Region, we meet regularly with the wider Wellington Region and the National Co-ordinators. We also attend annual Formation Days to which any parishioners are warmly invited.

Each July Passionist Family Group Youth and Young Adults camps are held. We go along to help as cooks at the Magnificat Retreat Centre in Featherston. Any of our young people are welcome to register through the website of the Parish Office.

We appreciate Fr Tony's encouragement and attendance at Passionist Family Group events.

If you would like to join a group please contact us, complete an enrolment form that are available in the foyer of both churches or just contact the Parish Office

Terry and Heather O'Brien

Passionist Family Group Co-ordinators



St Vincent de Paul Society – Heretaunga

As Vincentians, our goal is to promote human dignity and justice through personal contact with those in need. In so doing, our own lives are enriched.

We would like to report our activities for the past 12 months with (nos) denoting number of persons involved and (hrs) the time spent.

Assistance: 100 (nos), 80 (hrs); Companionship: 45 (nos), 40 (hrs); Supply of food: 35 (nos), 15 (hrs); Transport: 5 (nos), 20 (hrs); Visits to private homes: 20 (nos), 60 (hrs); Visits to Rest Homes: 70 (nos), 25 (hrs).

In addition, two of our members helped out at the Stokes Valley or Petone Shops. We continue to supply non-perishable goods to the St John's food bank, thanks to donations received at Mass. We also put together 30 Christmas parcels of goods and toys. The parcels each included a food voucher for \$20.

Payments of \$490 have been made to cover overdue debt while we have supplied a number of food vouchers and, in one recent case, payment of motel accommodation and spending money for a family needing a fresh start.



Our contact with those in need is generally through "word of mouth". Some seek help through Fr Tony and we never turn them away. We are non-judgemental and go about our work in a quiet manner.

We enjoy a close relationship with St Brendon's School. They generously provide us with cans of food etc while we have made payments this year of \$480 to help out families in need.

The conference has been particularly involved with the collection and supply of household goods and pantry items as well as providing help in setting up various homes for refugee families.

Though small in numbers, we are united by faith in doing good works.

Terry Kavanagh

President

St Vincent de Paul Society – Stokes Valley



In writing this report I am conscious of the work volunteers do that cannot be quantified, going the extra mile for some of the needy people who come into our shop in Stokes Valley. Examples – cooking a meal for someone in trouble, gathering together baby clothes/gear or clothes for a family in need, a kind word or just listening to someone who needs to share – the list goes on.

Thank you, we could not do it without you.

We in Stokes Valley store household goods in case of accidents, fires, separations etc. We have helped two families through sad circumstances just this year. Thanks to Margaret Lanigan who did a wonderful job for one of these families. Our shop serves Our Lady of the Valleys parish. We rely on the good will and donations from our community at large.



We donate money to the Catholic Student Assistance Fund. We pay for the upkeep of our relief centre situated behind St Francis Xavier Church. This is Frank Vaillini's domain. Food is collected from supermarkets in Lower Hutt, is stored – sorted and then delivered valley wide from Wainuiomata to the top of Upper Hutt. Even though Frank is a paid employee he is a true Vincentian at heart and does a wonderful job.

Also, Communion is taken to the infirmed at home and weekly visits to the hospitalised at "Stokeswood" Rest Home in Stokes Valley.

To the end of March this year our workload has included

• Communion	380
• Home visits	90
• Meals	3
• Hospital visits	315
• Transport to church	135
• Food parcels	1,202
• Furniture deliveries	449
• Volunteer shop hours	7,000

For 2016 Christmas we delivered Christmas food and gifts for children aged from birth to 16 years

• Children presents	130
• Food hampers	45 families

These were just in Stokes Valley.

I would like to acknowledge the hard work of our committee, Win Lewer, Chris Henley and our secretary Frances Cummings.

Also, a special thanks to Margaret Lanigan who has resigned from our Society after serving many years as our Treasurer.

Many thanks to the many people who donate food at our Masses each week and the people who kindly donate to our Poor Box in the church foyer.

Gordon Holmes

President

"Let us do without hesitation whatever good lies at our hand"
(Frederic Ozanam) Founder of our S.V.D.P.S 1833