

Portstewart Parish Council

Minutes of Meeting 8th April 2014

Marian Hall, 7.30pm

Attendance: Sally Andrew, Terry Butcher (Chair), Aaron Doherty, Sean Farren, James Harley, Fr Austin McGirr, Ernestine McKeever, Edel Moony, Eimear O’Keeffe.

13.1 The opening prayer was led by Sally Andrew

13.2 The minutes of the March meeting were approved.

13.3 Arrangements for the forthcoming Parish Congress on 3rd May were reviewed and approved. These arrangements were contained in reports from the Welcome Group (Ernestine), from the Strategy and Communications Group (Terry), from the Catering Group (Edel), from the Youth Group (Terry), from the Facilitation Group (Sally) and from the Hall Group (Aaron). A meeting will take place on Tuesday 29th April at 6.30pm for a final review of preparations. Parishioners attending Mass 12/13 as well as 26/27 April will be requested to indicate on a form to be distributed if they propose to attend the Congress. A programme for young children and youth under 14 is being devised by the Flame Club with assistance from Eoghan Rua for the sports element and will take place at the school. The final line up of participants for the panel session should be complete with in the next few days. Media contact has already been made with the Irish Catholic and will be made with the Irish News for it Faith Matters page, and with local press.

13.4 A report from Sally and Terry updated members on developments within the Pastoral Area Team(PAT). Developments include finalising a draft constitution and a meeting with Portrush, Portstewart and Coleraine to review common initiatives. The development of a Baptism preparatory programme is being discussed and it was felt that the three parishes could collaborate in developing one. The Beatitudes programme has been going very well in Ballymoney and the University and maybe extended to other parishes. The Welcome Ministry training programme has been completed and it is now proposed to implement the Ministry with the establishment of a special committee.

13.5 Centenary: Sean reported on the work of the Booklet Group which has now got access to the Coleraine Parish Chronicle which contains entries covering the period from the late 1800s to 1980 and therefore material relevant to Portstewart parish. A box with other material has been located within the Diocesan Archives and will be viewed in the near future. Fr Austin the centenary celebrations which will centre on the month of July 2016 will include a preparatory mission in May and might include a special dinner, an exhibition of artefacts, pictures etc. A special committee will be established after the Congress to devise a comprehensive programme.

13.6 Stella Maris distribution has now been put on a firm basis to obviate delays in its delivery.

13.7 Sean reported that the planned visit by a group from the Rathmines Parish Council in Dublin will take place on 13-14 June. The group will arrive about 6 o'clock on the 13th. A welcome meal will provide an opportunity for all to meet. On the 14th the group will attend 9.30 Mass after which both councils will meet in Marian Hall for a period of discussion during which their respective programmes of work will be outlined. Lunch in the hall will be followed by a quick tour of the North Coast before departure late afternoon.

13.8 Fr Austin reported on the first Engaged Counter meeting which attracted six couples and was judged very successful. A second session is likely to take place in the autumn.

13.9 Terry reported that as yet no progress had been made in developing a Marriage Encounter programme.

13.9 AoB: Efforts are being made to develop a Junior Alpha programme (forgot to note who mentioned this – details please)

13.10 The next meeting will take place on Thursday 29th May at 7.30.

13.11 The meeting concluded with prayer led by Fr Austin.