

Portstewart Parish Pastoral Council

Meeting on
Friday the 20th March 2015

Parochial House

Attendance: Sally Andrew, Terry Butcher (Chair), Aaron Doherty, Arlene Duffy, Sean Farren, James Harley, Ernestine McKeever and Fr Austin.

- 22.1.1 The opening prayer and reading was led by James Harley.
- 22.1.2 The minutes of the February meeting were adopted.
- 22.1.3 Arrangements for events to mark the **Golden Jubilee** of his ordination to the priesthood of Bishop Farquhar were discussed and approved. The events will include evening Mass on Friday 19th June followed by reception in the Parish Centre where presentations will be made.
- 22.1.4 **Centenary:** the possibility of a Gala event were discussed as well as the suggestion that a well known personality be invited to appear. Members of the Council are to follow up. Sean reported on progress with the centenary book which it is hoped will be available from mid-November if summer deadline for completion of text is met.
- 22.1.5 **Walk of Witness:** Fr Austin reported that arrangements are well in hand for the Walk of Witness on Good Friday. The walk is being organised by clergy from all local churches and will commence at 2.00pm on the Harbour Hill and proceed to the Diamond with a number of stops on the way for prayers and readings.
- 22.1.6 **Men's Shed:** Fr Austin reported that premises have been acquired and that firm planning can now proceed for the opening of the 'shed'. The shed is being developed by the Portstewart Inter-Church Civic Project and is modelled on a concept already working in other areas.
- 22.1.7 **GIFT:** Terry reported on the completion of the first GIFT programme in which 17 local year 8 students participated. The end of the programme was marked at the 11.00am Mass on 15th March when the young people actively participated in the liturgy. Next year it is planned to run two programmes. Terry also reported that the Flame Club has increased its membership and is proving quite popular among the age group involved.
- 22.1.8 **Pastoral Area Team:** Fr. Austin reported that the Pastoral Area Team is currently considering how to manage the inclusion of five more parishes. Training sessions for lectors and Eucharistic Ministers have been held and some more are planned. The aim is to enhance participation in the Mass.

- 22.1.9 **Youth Survey:** Terry reported that the survey has been successfully piloted and with some amendments as a result will be soon ready for wider distribution.
- 22.1.10 **Welcome Ministry:** a lengthy discussion took place on how to implement the Welcome Ministry. While several parishioners attended a training programme there are some problems implementing the programme. Fr Austin agreed that he would attend a special meeting of those involved and hoped that problems could be successfully addressed.
- 22.1.11 Training sessions for a **Baptism preparation** programme will begin soon in Ballymena.
- 22.1.12 The **next meeting** will take place on Tuesday 21st April at 7.30pm.
- 22.1.13 Fr Austin led the closing prayer and the meeting ended at 9.00pm.