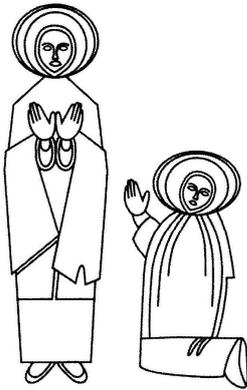


St. Bernadette's Parish Pastoral Council

Annual Report 2018-19



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A Parish Pastoral Council

A PPC is a faith-filled leadership group through which priests and people work together as co-responsible partners in furthering the mission of Christ in their own parish. It involves a committed group of people of God (clergy, religious and lay people) being called upon to review pastoral matters, reflect on them thoroughly and collaborate in planning the way forward for the parish. The PPC should be a representative body in which the diversity of the whole parish community is reflected. It is a means whereby all parishioners can take part in discussions that relate to the spiritual and pastoral development of the parish. The Council is “Pastoral” in that its primary concern is pastoral issues, not administration,

buildings, management or finance.

Specific responsibilities of the PPC include:

- discerning the pastoral and spiritual needs of the parish community and involving the whole parish in response to these needs
- supporting parishioners in understanding and living their baptismal call as followers of Christ
- providing structures that will bring together the pastoral and spiritual needs of the parish with the talents of parishioners and the resources in the parish
- ensuring that effective dialogue takes place within the parish, the Pastoral Area, the Diocese and the wider community
- reviewing annually the contribution it is making in the life of the parish.

Here, in St. Bernadette's Parish, our PPC Mission Statement proclaims:

“We, the Pastoral Council of St. Bernadette's Parish, inspired by the love of Jesus, will try to develop a vibrant and inclusive spiritual community which welcomes the active participation of everyone in the faith life of the parish.”

PPC members commit to attend meetings regularly: these are kept brief and are very focused. The members grow in knowledge of the parish and its mission and aim to emulate Christ and His Way.

In the monthly meetings, a prayerful atmosphere is crucial and members will spend the opening period of each meeting in prayer, invoking the assistance of the Holy Spirit and listening to, and reflecting upon, a gospel reading and related homily.

PPC Membership during the year:

Very Reverent Paul Armstrong P.P. President of the Council

Michael Doherty, Chair	Delores McFadden
Una Lynch, Vice-Chair	Estelle McGrath
Gerry Mooney, Secretary	Gerry Steele
Patricia McFlynn	Anne McCann
Eamon Foster	Bernie Farry

Transition of new PPC members

A number of new members joined the PPC at the start of our new year (September 2018). In welcoming our new members (Gerry, Anne, Delores, Bernie, Patricia) it seemed appropriate to reflect on the mission statement of St Bernadette's PPC and to consider future pastoral themes (programmes) that may be undertaken by our PPC. We have been working with the Living Church in seeking additional support and guidance on such themes and how we put these into action. An 'Away Day' is planned for the autumn of 2019 to provide the PPC with an opportunity to further explore and develop such themes. We hope to provide further updates on such activities throughout the year.

Advent & Lenten Calendars

In preparation for the seasons of Advent and Lent, the PPC produced an Advent Calendar & Lenten Calendar for parishioners with daily thoughts and reflections during each of the seasons. Both calendars were warmly received and most appreciated by parishioners.

Prayer Card

The PPC produced a prayer card with a number of prayers for use in the home including daily prayers, prayers for the family, daily reflections & prayers for inner peace. The prayer card was distributed to parishioners on Christmas Day. There are still some prayer cards available from the church if you would like to have one.

Lenten Programme

A primary focus for the PPC each year is the preparation for our annual Lenten Programme. The chosen programme this year entitled "**Let it Be Done Unto Me**" was a five-week DVD and discussion programme looking at the important role that Mary plays in the Church, discussed under a number of titles: **Chosen By God**, **The First Disciple**, **Mother of All**, **Queen of Heaven** and **Help of Christians**.

The programme produced by CaFE (www.faithcafe.org) was well received by those parishioners who attended over the five weeks. Those attending found the programme prayerful, inspiring and faith-enriching. The short group discussions were also informative, providing parishioners with the

opportunity to share their own experience and thoughts on the programme.

The PPC is extremely grateful for the support shown by our parishioners for the Lenten Programme each year.

Pastoral Community Forum (PCF)

Work continues on the development of the South and East Belfast Pastoral Area Forum and greater collaboration between the various parishes in our Pastoral Area. A number of meetings have been held throughout the past year, exploring a number of initiatives and how these may be realised within the life of our parishes. Representatives from St Bernadette's PPC attend the forum. Further information on the work of the PCF will be provided throughout the year.

Fr Armstrong's Jubilee Celebration

The PPC contributed to the preparation of Fr Armstrong's Golden Jubilee celebration in May. Our warmest congratulations to Fr Armstrong on achieving his Golden Jubilee and to his years of service in the diocese and to the people of St Bernadette's Parish.

Looking to the Future

If you would like to be involved in the work of the Parish Council or provide support to the programmes or initiatives of the PPC, please accept our warmest invitation to approach Fr Armstrong or a member of the PPC.

Conclusion

This is a short overview of the work undertaken by the PPC during the last year. If any parishioner would like more information about our aims and objectives, or would like to make suggestions regarding our future work, please do not hesitate to speak to any member of the council.

St. Bernadette's Parish Pastoral Council June 2019