

PARISH ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL (PAC) ANNUAL REPORT OF ACTIVITIES FOR YEAR JUNE 2016 TO MAY 2017

by the PAC

This report covers the activities of the Parish Administrative Council (PAC) as provided for under Article 13 of the 2012 Statutes of the Association of John XXIII. During the period under review, eight meetings were held, as well as one expanded meeting to include our colleagues from the parish office in order to facilitate the overall administration of the parish; henceforth this will be done on a quarterly basis. Beyond our own parish, we are now in the midst of an extraordinary jubilee year called by Pope Francis, the Holy Year of Mercy, putting our own efforts in a global context of Roman Catholic faith and charity.

Introduction

Thanks to your unceasing devotion to the St. John XXIII community, our parish continues to expand and flourish. We currently have 2,344 active households in the parish out of a total registered of 4,500. 16 families notified us of their departure but this was compensated by the arrival of 34 new families. In summary, we estimate the associated membership to amount to 4,500, consisting of 103 nationalities.

Fr. Richard de Lord left our parish on February 1st, 2017 after ten years of pastoral service to our community. Fr. Paul was appointed as *Parish Priest* for St John XXIII by Monseigneur Charles Morerod, the Bishop of Lausanne, Geneva, and Fribourg, for a period of five years, with effect from 1st March 2017.

We would like to express our gratitude to both Fr Richard for his commitment to the development of our spiritual lives as parishioners and wish him to be a blessing to everyone in his current ministry. Fr. Paul settled into his new functions with ease and is fully engaged in the religious lives and welfare of our fellow parishioners. With the support of Mgrs. Bob Vitillo, Obiora Francis Ike and Fr. Lawrence our parish is well served in the various aspects of our Catholic faith.

The achievements of the past year derive from our concerted team effort. The office staff led by Tess Baarde has provided the administrative support that runs the affairs of our parish *with* Lucy, Maribel, Edith, Jane, and Emily. Tess has been on medical leave since April of this year and we ask all parishioners to remember Tess in their prayers.

The term of office of the President of our treasurer has come to an end. (We extend our appreciation to Oscar for eleven years of dedicated service as a member of the PAC. Under item 10, we shall elect his successor and a new member responsible for HR.

In general, we are pleased to report a successful year. We look forward to meeting the challenges of the year to come.

Overall, we are pleased to report a successful year and look forward to meeting the challenges of the year to come.

1. Accomplishments this year

The **Parish Office** has seven part-time staff. Youth Minister Emily Toole is on maternity leave and our Office Manager Tess Baarde is on medical leave, Accountant Lucy Odhiambo, Publication and Bulletins Officer Marlene Antoulas, IT and Web Administrator Marlene Mapanao, Receptionist Edith Braunwalder and Religious Education Coordinator Jane Gannon. In addition, Sarah Edejer assists the Youth Minister in the planning, delivery, and coordination of St. John XXIII Youth Ministry.

The Parish Office continues to provide support the various fundraising events of the parish, in the various Sacraments, liturgical and seasonal activities as well as adult formation activities.

The Parish Office also continues to interface with parishioners and respond to their needs, as well as overseeing the smooth running of all aspects of parish operations and administration.

The Saint John XXIII historical society which was successfully launched on 13th April 2016, coordinated by Lourdes Berrig. We are most grateful to especially to our senior parishioners who generously of their time to record our history.

In terms of **Property Management**, there have been expected repairs: to high-use doors and blinds in the Parish House, and to an old, original door in the main church. In addition, there was an unexpected need to readjust ventilation due to a clogged filter and other ducting issues contributing to mold growth in one shower.

Slight modifications have also been made to the Parish House interior walkways, improving the privacy of living spaces of residents and visiting priests (who share a floor with the Parish Office). Additionally, the exterior lighting controls were carefully examined, and an energy saving automatic turn-on/turn-off feature activated. This cost-economy circuit was actually part of the original installation, but it has now been restored and documented with the Parish Office.

Cyber Property:

The parish has updated its old website using its own staff and existing web properties (that is, avoiding IT consultant fees and purchasing new software). A PAC subcommittee reviewed the progress and plans for this cyber update on March 17th, 2017, and found the new website had already accomplished two important objectives, namely improving its internal navigation and providing a feature making it convenient for Father Paul to request changes so as to readily express his own ideas of how to market/present the “St. John XXIII brand.”

Other changes are planned. Concerning the parish’s online registration database system (which is scheduled for revamping as staff time allows), the recent review allows the PAC to certify that this system is currently being run/maintained in what is by far the least costly way of doing it.

Roofing Concerns

The big concern of Property Management is the roof of the worship area (which was NOT refurbished during the 2013 renovation/move-in). Even though roof maintenance professionals consistently report that this roof is in good shape considering its age (50 years old), the roof is clearly

approaching the end of its life. For the present, the roof strategy continues to remain a policy of close monitoring (with up to two on-roof inspections/cleanings per year) and looking for any change in the leaks into the worship area that would require immediate consultations with an architect or builder. In the meantime, we are actively seeking suggestions for less expensive fixes that could prolong the roof life until other the new management of the parish is well installed, and the parish debt repayment and fundraising strategies are clearly established and proven.

Upcoming Workshop

The Diocese is organizing a workshop to help parishes manage such issues. It will be called “Atelier Mission Intérieure sur la rénovation d'église”, to be held on Saturday, August 19th in la cure de la paroisse de l'Epiphanie au Lignon (Place du Lignon 32, 1219 Le Lignon). The property management representative from PAC has agreed to participate.

Fundraising

Fundraising has also gone well this year, and the Committee would like to thank all Parishioners for their continued financial support to Saint John XXIII.

In the past year, the parish has conformed to the schedule of Sunday collections as required by the Diocese. We have contributed to 21 different charitable works of the Catholic Church at diocesan, Swiss, international, and pontifical levels (See St. John XXIII Parish Outreach Report 2016 for details).

Although there are still outstanding loans, the PAC decided to temporarily discontinue the “Lighten the Load” Pledge Marathon. However, this programme (or an alternative one/s) may be reconsidered during the second semester of 2017).

Indicated below are the results of the fundraising activities undertaken since the 2016 General Assembly:

Activity	Net gain
“Lighten the Load”- extra collection	29,406.10
Spanish Evening and Kids Fiesta	4,986.75
Annual <i>Kermesse</i>	47,329.02
Total	81,721.87

We are well aware of our outstanding debt and responsibilities. We will continue to look for guidance for future solutions.

The **protection** of children and young people and keeping our church premises a safe place for everyone remains a key aspect of our parish duties.

The Safeguarding Coordinator (previously, Child Protection Coordinator) ensures the parish is a safe and secure place for children, young people, and vulnerable adults, as we practice and live the faith with the following responsibilities which are listed below.

The Coordinator acts as a focal point for allegations of child abuse and/or neglect. He convenes the child protection team to address and manage allegations properly. He organises child protection training workshops that are open to other Christian communities in the Geneva area. He is in charge of raising awareness of child protection policy and issues among youth workers and catechists. He liaises with the REC Coordinator to ensure that youth workers and catechists have filed personal form and that they attend all the relevant training workshops at least once every three years, as well as with the local authorities that are responsible for child protection.

The current Coordinator has met with the RE coordinator and the youth minister to ensure that registered catechists' disclosure forms are up-to-date and to talk about the organisation of the Child Protection workshop for catechists and volunteers this year.

It should be noted that The St John 23rd Parish Policy on safeguarding children and young people which underwent revision last year is still valid and is due for review in May 2018.

There are still some challenges. Personally checking the references of the catechist volunteers has not been done as much as it should have been. Keeping the disclosure forms updated for youth workers also still remains to be done.

We have some current targets. These are to act on plans from last year which were not implemented. To continue to ensure that all relevant parish volunteers have filled in and submitted their disclosure forms, and to be able to check relevant references of volunteers to as much as 70%. To organise a

briefing from the Geneva agency *Service Protection de Mineur/e/s* for the Safeguarding Response Team between now and June 2017, the last one, being some years ago already.)

As for **Finances**, in 2016, the parish repaid CHF 100,000 of the loan principal that was part of the bridging loans from ECR and MI. The outstanding balance on 31st December 2016 was CHF 1,398,000. The total income received in 2016 was CHF 660,884, compared to CHF 669,475 in 2015. Income from other outreach initiatives including the Kermesse rose from CHF 411,625 to 435,404 in 2016, largely because of an increase in Turkana pledges.

In accordance with IAS 8, (*Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors*), the Parish has decided to reflect a change in the cost of the new parish building block that had originally been expensed to reflect a change in accounting estimate in accordance with IAS 8, (*Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors*). The capitalisation of the parish building gives a truer representation of the state of the parish financial position and liabilities incurred relating to the bridge loans that were used to part-finance the costs of the parish building.

Vicariate Liaison

The key functions of the Vicariate Liaison are to facilitate communications with the vicariate in Geneva (Eglise Catholique à Genève—ECG), especially with Pascal Desthieux (Episcopal Vicar), Michel Colin (Chancellor), and Dominique Pittet (General Secretary), as needed. It is also to facilitate communications with the diocesan office in Fribourg and with Mgr. Charles Moredod, as needed.

We have had several **accomplishments** during the course of the year. Michel Colin (Chancellor) met with Fr. Paul and a search committee (Fr Paul, Michael Wilson, Alistair Davidson, Roy Ryan, and Craig Titus) to acknowledge the fruits apparent in the parish in the light of Fr. Paul's ministry. Mr. Colin then made a recommendation to the Pascal Desthieux, who recommended that Mgr. Morerod name Fr. Friel parish priest.

The parish has conformed to the schedule of Sunday collections as required by the Diocese. We have contributed to 21 different charitable works of the Catholic Church at diocesan, Swiss, international, and pontifical levels (See St. John XXIII Parish Outreach Report 2016 for details).

After having paid off the bridge loan (December 2015), we have made the needed repayments to the parish debts to the Vicariate and the Mission Interior.

Because of the financial implications of our renovation project, we have been freed from the obligation to make further financial contributions to the diocese, at the present time.

The Vicariate has agreed to repay 50% of the parish expenses to cover Fr. Richard's sabbatical.

The vicariate will reimburse the expenses of and stipends for priests who aid Fr. Friel, to a maximum of 3,000CHF each month. We have received continuing support from the Diocese and the Vicariate. Bishop Charles Morerod, Episcopal Vicar Pascal Desthieux, and the Vicariate staff have been especially helpful in a range of practical and pastoral matters.

Out **targets** for the year 2017/18 are to Continue to have good communications with Pascal Desthieux, the rest of the Geneva vicariate, and the larger diocese and to prepare a report for the use of the MI funds on the church building. We also aim to renegotiate the holiday for contributions to the vicariate (annual) and to continue negotiations and communication with the General Secretary, Dominic Pittet, in regard to parish loans

In terms of **Human Resources**, the contract of the Youth Minister up to for renewal on the 4 August 2017. The position of Assistant to the Youth Minister was brought in on an annual contract that is valid until 30 June 2017.

Parishioners who work in the office have now have regular office meetings and have built up a remarkable team spirit improving work cohesion and office relations. With Fr. Paul fully in office now, together with the PAC and the staff he will lead a desk-to-desk review and offer opportunities for parish officers to upgrade their skills, and strong consensus that we need a review of holidays, vacations and salaries, and clear cut guidelines on the same.

Lessons drawn from the results of this exercise will help improve the parish working conditions.

Communications Report 2017

The **Communications Officer (2017)** is responsible for assisting with clear and effective communications in the Church inter alia with the parishioners,

PAC, PPC and priests; Responsible for taking minutes at PAC meetings. The officer was elected to the position at our General Assembly in June 2015.

There are **challenges** for the period 2017/18. These concentrate around the need to effectively communicate parish needs and activities. More specifically, to evaluate and keep relevant current communications strategy through the pulpit, the newsletter, traditional media, the website, and social media.

The Parish Bulletin is now fully online. The new website has been developed under the direction of office and Fr. Paul.

However, communication and community building after mass could be enhanced with increased and improved hospitality activities, such as the proposed café.

Communicating Financial and Fundraising Aspects. We have an ongoing need to effectively communicate fundraising needs and responsibilities with clarity to community. While day to day finances are relatively healthy, to 2020, need to communicate focus upon a) that the bridge loan has been repaid b) focus shifting to pay back the principle and the *Mission Interieure* (see related report by C. Titus).

With regards to **fostering communications and community within the Parish**, we need to evaluate current communications strategies and work to make improvements. The PAC should revisit the proposal for possible café, at least a temporary outdoor café from Easter to October with the dual

function of fostering communications and community as well as fundraising to be considered by sub-committee of Property Committee in the fall of 2017 if still valid/feasible.

The project on documenting the history of our community under way.

With regards to **communicating with the larger community in Geneva/Anglophone Catholics in Haute-Savoie/Suisse Romand**, we need appropriate signage outside the church, possibly to cover recent vandalism to the tower needs to be implemented in 2017. We also have to ensure newcomers to Geneva are aware of church, activities location via traditional media, website, social media

2. Challenges and targets for the year ahead

The PAC will continue its efforts to improve our electronic communications strategy for on-line registration and encourage the use of modern technology and apps to enhance the sense of community among parishioners and continue to make new-comers from Geneva aware of our community.

In terms of **Property Management**, the roof maintenance and enhancing the facilities can for parishioners to communicate after mass will be given due consideration.

As for **Fundraising**, we are well aware of our remaining financial debt and responsibilities and will continue to look for ideas for future solutions to meet our CHF 120'000 annual loan and including capital repayment obligations. The key to future progress will be forming a fundraising

advisory group in order to address current and emerging financial needs

Other specific challenges include checking the references of the catechist volunteers and keeping the disclosure forms updated for youth workers, as well as ensuring all relevant parish volunteers have filled in and submitted their disclosure forms (checking as many as 70%). Finally, we must organize a briefing for the Safeguarding Response Team from the Geneva agency Service Protection de Mineur/e/s, as the last one was some years ago.

Through the **Vicariate Liaison**, we have received a reduction on the long-term loans with the ECG. Due to the financial implications of our renovation project, we have been freed from one of the financial obligations to the diocese, at the present time. We intend to continue harnessing the support from the Diocese and the Vicariate, Bishop Charles Morerod, Auxiliary Bishop Pierre Farine, Episcopal Vicar Pascal Desthieux, and the Vicariate staff and to propose further practical options to reduce our debt burden.

We also face a number of **Human Resources** challenges. An organisational restructuring will be led by Fr Paul and based on the salary analysis that has been undertaken, new roles and remuneration packages will be developed in line with the regulations of State of Geneva and the work culture of the vicariate.

The post of HR will hopefully be filled at this GA and a team will be established to handle all employee contracts.

3. Conclusion

All in all, it has been another successful year. The Parish House and Parish

office are in good order, and we understand what needs to be done to improve working practices and boost morale among our parishioners who support our community. As ever, fundraising remains an important priority, as well as the careful stewardship of the parish's assets, debts, and responsibilities. Thanks to the energy and enthusiasm of the parishioners, however, we have the unity required to meet the challenges ahead, inspired as always by God's love and grace. God bless you all.