



**EGLISE  
CATHOLIQUE  
ROMAINE**  
GENÈVE

## Draft Minutes of the General Assembly

26<sup>th</sup> July 2020 – St JohnXXIII Church

### ATTENDANCE

#### **PAC Members:**

President	Oscar Mbeche
Vice President	Joselito Benitez
Treasurer	Augustine Agyeman-Duah
Vicariate Liaison	Camille Roney
Child Protection/Safeguarding	Celeste Sandoval
Property Management	Yvonne Moussy
Fundraising	Jorge Flores
Parish Priest	Fr. Paul C. Friel

#### **Apologies:**

Human Resources	Gerry Lynch
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**Parishioners: (7)**

Deusdedit Mubangizi

Raphael Evoeme

Chinedu Patrick

Maria A. Barrozo (Marigel)

Maribel Mapanao

Lucy Odhiambo

Cecilia Cuello

**Minutes:** Maria Angelita Barrozo (Marigel)

**1. Opening Prayer**

The meeting started at 12:00 with an opening prayer from Fr. Paul

**2. Welcome & Approval of Agenda**

Oscar Mbeche, PAC President, greeted the Assembly and parishioners who were present. He introduced to new parishioner that PAC is responsible for the Parish's day to day administration matters and finances, the Parish Office Staff, legal issues and other requirements by Geneva Canton. Quorum was dispensed with the assembly of 7 parishioners and 7 PAC members.

The chair noted that the General Assembly was delayed due to unforeseen circumstances of pandemic Covid 19. He declared that, pursuant to Art. 8 Sec 3 the Agenda was published on the parish website prior to the meeting. There were no additions or amendments were noted and the agenda was approved.

### **3. Approval of GA minutes**

Oscar Mbeche presided over the approval process of the 19<sup>th</sup> June 2019 General Assembly minutes.

No other questions or amendments were noted and the minutes of the 19<sup>th</sup> June 2019 was approved.

### **4. Parish Administrative Council (PAC) Report 2019**

(Separate sheet containing full PAC report)

Oscar Mbeche thanked Father Paul who has continued to support our parish diligently during this unique period. He thanked also the PAC colleagues for all the work done in 2019-2020. He thanked the Parish staff; various volunteers who keep the various church ministries running; the church choirs; the PPC members and coordinators who work closely with Fr. Paul on the parish pastoral matters; the religious education ministry coordinators and teachers.

He further conveyed the Parish's gratitude to:

- Stephen Smith, Petra Lindner, Lito Benitez and Annie Yuson for assisting the online masses during lockdown.
- Leonard Greer who prepared the church for opening by designing the social distancing arrangements and to all volunteers who diligently assist and sanitize the church.
- To all the assisting priests at various masses and religious events throughout the year and since the church reopened.
- Beryl Oriaro, our auditor who carried out a thorough audit of our 2019 financial accounts.
- He personally thanked all those who supported and gave prayers when he lost his mother in December 2019.

He highlighted the need to keep in mind as a PAC member and President, our special thoughts and prayers to all those directly affected by Covid 19; those who lost loved ones; those who's jobs and income were impacted by COVID-19.

He joined in thanksgiving with all those who were healed from Covid 19 infections and came out healthy including our own Fr. Paul who was also healed of the infection.

### **Fundraising**

Fundraising activities has been suspended and curtailed in 2020 due to effects of Covid 19. Our annual major fundraising activity, the Kermesse, has also been delayed to a later date this year that will be communicated.

The Parish received CHF 78,000 as Covid-19 loan from the Swiss Federal Government through the Canton of Geneva. This loan will be repaid within 5 years. The loan was requested under the conditions allowed in our Parish statutes, "Article 18 – Prior Opinion of the Bishop"

### **Safeguarding/Child Protection- Celeste Sandoval**

Safeguarding Policy has been reviewed in 2018 and has been up to date. The next review will be in June 2022. Mentioned some important 2020 Update especially as it affects our children and young parishioners:

- The St John 23rd Parish Policy on safeguarding children and young people which underwent revision in 2016 and validated in 2018, was slightly updated to reflect the new Charter against sexual abuse (French) established by the Diocese of Lausanne, Geneva and Fribourg on 1st January 2019 and the corresponding new requirements, updated the resources section and revised wording to reflect the new Director of Religious Education. The next policy review is due in June 2022. (specific changes to note: items 6, 9b, 9c, 12 until 15.)

The Parish began to take on the requirement for all people working with children and young people to present a criminal record extract and a special extract, in addition to the Declaration Forms and three-yearly Child Protection workshop attendance that is currently required by the Parish for all.

## 5. Parish Administrative Council Elections

The PAC position held by Celeste Sandoval for Child Protection, renamed to **Safe Guarding Coordinator**, is up for re-election. Celeste's term has come to an end having been re-elected twice before, in 2013 and in 2019, will now not stand for re-election. The Parish Administrative Council invited parishioners fill this position by standing for election at this Annual General Assembly. The Parish is continuously seeking for candidates. No one came forward for election during this AGA. There is potential candidate who was however out of town during this AGA.. An update will be provided on this position as soon as a replacement is found to fill this important PAC position. Celeste will hold brief for now.

## 6. Parish Pastoral Council 2019 Report

Due to Covid 19 pastoral delays and changes will be updated on the website by the PPC members.

## 7. Religious Education- Anna Berkeley

(Separate sheet containing full Religious Education report has been posted on the Parish website).

## 8. Report 2019 from the Representative of PPC- Sharon Leaderman

(Separate sheet containing full Parish Pastoral Council has been posted on the Parish website)

## 9. Vicariate Liaison 2019 Report- Camille Roney

(Separate sheet containing full vicariate liaison report has been posted on the Parish website)

## 10. Report on Parish Finances, followed by Q & A – Augustine Agyeman-Duah

### Financial performance & Challenge

Augustine Agyeman-Duah stated that our finances are on track despite of the challenges we've faced in 2019. Financial statement overall is in good position with a surplus of about CHF 183,509. Income was decreased by 4.8 mainly because of decreasing pledges and also decreased in funds and activities including kermesse. The Parish was on track and within the budget by about 59,600 and a decreased of 4.4 % expenditures compared to 2018 financial year results. A special thanks was extended to Father Paul, PAC members and all parishioners who support the finances and thanked Lucy Odhiambo, Parish bookkeeper for her diligence and ensuring that the Parish stays within the budget.

He reiterated the Parish's commitment to repaying our loans. As of December 2018 our loan balance was CHF 1 million, were paid CHF 200,000 of the principal amount and interest payments of CHF 40,000 to reduce the outstanding loan amount to CHF 800,000 at the end of today, in July 26 July 2020...

## **11. Approval of Budgets**

The Parish annual Budget of CHF 721,211 was presented by the PAC Treasurer, and was approved by the General Assembly.

Deus Mubangizi congratulated the Oscar Mbeche, Berryl Oriario, and Augustine Agyeman-Duah and all the Parish staff for keeping up their great work.

## **12. Auditor's Report**

The 2019 Financial Statements auditors report was presented. It was a clean audit report. The PAC requested the assembly to allow the Parish Treasurer to read the Auditor's Report. The Auditor, Berryl Oriario, had given notice of not being able to attend the AGA in person due to another pressing commitment. In the absence of Berryl Oriario, Augustine Agyeman-Duah read the report.

(Separate sheet containing full Auditor's report)

### **13. Stewardship Campaign Update**

Oscar Mbeche appealed for support and consideration to register for our pledges campaign. He also mentioned that there are new additional methods by which parishioners and well wishes to the Parish can send in contributions to the church. The new methods for sending in contributions or giving for electronic and online use are: La Quete, TWINT and PAYPAL (under investigation).

### **14. Any Other Business**

#### **Covid 19 Loan:**

Augustine relayed that they applied and obtained a loan of CHF 78,000 from the Geneva Canton to support our parish, to maintain our fixed expenses that includes staff salaries and utilities during Covid-19 pandemic, that resulted in reduced collections. Under the conditions allowed in our Parish statutes, Art. 18.

#### **Maintaining Social Distancing:**

Social distancing sitting arrangements should be observed during masses and ceremonies in the church. During the period of Covid-19, to reduce the risk of infections and maintain distance in social contacts, collection baskets are not to be passed around but rather will be placed at convenient points and at the exit doors of the church.

#### **Reduction in Charitable Givings and Outreach Support:**

Due to reduced collections because of Covid 19 pandemic, the Parish had to reduce the level of support given for outreach charitable support to various projects in developing countries. The amounts given to support our sister Parish Turkana in Kenya has also been reduced by 25%. A review of this support will be done once the Parish resumes higher levels of collections.

#### **Parish Assistance Provided during Covid-19:**

Food donations and assistance were provided by the Filipino (Philippines) community and directly by Fr. Paul, who continues to assist those adversely affected and require food assistance. Our parishioners also assist in soup kitchens.

It was also highlighted to Parishioners, that the Canton of Geneva also has COVID-19 assistance programs and food banks. Parishioners were requested to take note of this and to utilize this first if and when in need, as they are properly manned and adequately catered for to support those living in Geneva and affected by the effects of COVID-19 pandemic.

#### **15. Close of 2020 AGA meeting**

The meeting ended at 12:45 with a closing prayer from Fr. Paul our Parish Priest.



Oscar Mbeche

Oscar Mbeche, PAC President



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Marigel Barrozo, GA Secretary

**DISCLAIMER:** This draft version of the GA Minutes is subject to amendments prior to the formal approval of the General Assembly in 2021. The approved version will then be formally signed and dated by the signatories above.