

St John the Evangelist Parish, Duncan Terrace, Islington Parish Council Annual Report 2015

May 2016

<p>1. Establishment, Composition and Purpose of Council</p>	<p>The task of the Parish Council is to support the Parish Priest in his pastoral duties and act as a channel of communication between the Parish Priest and the parishioners.</p> <p>The Council is governed by its Constitution agreed in May 2011.</p> <p>The Parish Council at the close of the year 2015 comprised: Tosin Akinboboye , Amos Curtis, Michael Fletcher (Chair), . Sister Kathleen, Samantha Kelly, Ilaria Nisoli, Henry Okereafor, Justin Portess, Louie Salvoni, Charles Wood, and Guido Waldman (Secretary).</p> <p>Charles Wood was elected at the Annual General Meeting. Tosin Akinboboye, Ilaria Nisoli, and Henry Okereafor, stood down and were re-elected.</p>
<p>2. Parish Clergy, Staff and Assistants</p>	<p>Mgr Séamus O’Boyle and Fr Martin Plunkett, ably supported by Fr Larry Milby who has also been in residence, have maintained the level of devoted service at St John’s while also having to minister to the needs of the neighbouring Blessed Sacrament parish.</p> <p>In September Fr Martin was transferred to the Cathedral as a chaplain. Fr David Lucuy, a newly ordained priest, was appointed to us in his place. While we have greatly missed Fr Martin, Fr David has certainly deserved his warm welcome among us.</p> <p>Fr Larry celebrated the Golden Jubilee of his ordination, and a presentation was made to him by the parishioners at the party following the Annual General Meeting.</p> <p>St John’s Parish staff includes a Secretary to the Parish Priest, a Bookkeeper, a Housekeeper, and a Cleaner, all part-time workers. Parishioners help as volunteers with such tasks as laundry, church cleaning, and flower arranging. They also serve as Eucharistic Ministers, Readers, Catechists, Collection Counters, and both young and old serve as acolytes.</p> <p>Oscar Ignatius has come in once weekly to maintain the parish Accounts.</p> <p>At the year’s end there remained an urgent need to recruit a volunteer Parish Health & Safety Officer, a Fire Marshal, and a Parish Safeguarding Officer to co-ordinate with the Diocese on Disclosure and Barring for staff and volunteers working with vulnerable people. Tina Oliva, Head of St John’s Primary School, has stood down as Parish Safeguarding Officer; her work has been greatly appreciated.</p> <p>Music at the liturgies remains in the care of Adrian Gunning, organist and choirmaster, who also arranges well-attended monthly organ recitals over the summer.</p>
<p>3. Communications within parish</p>	<p>The principal means of communication between the Parish Priest, Council and parishioners are through verbal notices at the end of Mass, the Noticeboard in the church lobby, and the weekly Newsletter. The Newsletter may also now be downloaded from the parish website, which is kept regularly updated by our Webmaster, Thomas Machura.</p> <p>Instead of a parish picnic this year, the Annual General Meeting was combined with a party for parish workers.</p>
<p>4. Liturgy and music</p>	<p>The summer programme of organ recitals was as usual well attended. Proceeds from the retiring collection were used to support the provision of music for the liturgy.</p>

5. Pastoral outreach	<p>The Parish branch of the Legion of Mary has continued on a regular basis, under the leadership of Leanne Georgiades, and is a welcome addition to our outreach projects.</p> <p>A post-Confirmation group, in the 14 to 19 age band, has been established under Tosin Akinboboye, and Hemi, for open discussions of ethical and other issues.</p> <p>The <u>RCIA</u> initiative is well established in the parish, under the leadership of David Lester, who has received great support from Sr Miriam Bruder and George Prosser. At the Easter Vigil in 2015 nine adults were baptized or received into the Catholic church.</p> <p>There were sixty-nine children baptized in the parish.</p>
6. The Sunday Club	<p>This would be the last year that Molly McConville ran this outreach project, which she has done most successfully. The Council has been considering how it might better help those who attend, especially in the light of other similar local projects for the homeless and the lonely. Funding has been adequate, but more volunteers to help run it are needed, including men. They might benefit from more support and training. Anti-social behaviour outside the church remains a problem, as the volunteers have to concentrate on serving those in the Centre.</p>
7. St John's Youth Centre	<p>The Youth Club continues to attract a good number of local young people but virtually none from the parish. However an appeal for volunteers has proved fruitful in recruiting a number of ladies from the Legion of Mary, both to serve on the Committee and to help in the sessions. Recruitment was also facilitated when the Club and the School were in agreement on the Club having a stall at the School Summer Fair. This attracted favourable attention as well as generating a little income – not least with the raffle of a mountain bike generously donated by a Committee member. Funding was improved, with a three-year grant from one charity. Numbers, however, were slightly down for a variety of reasons. The dedicated youth staff is the Club's greatest asset.</p>
8. Time and Talents	<p>This is an ongoing programme to recruit more parishioners to help and support the parish clergy in the discharge of their duties. The first stage has been to boost the number of Eucharistic Ministers, Readers, and anyone helping with the liturgies. The result at the end of the first year is to show a good increase in the number of volunteer catechists, though recruitment of Readers, Eucharistic Ministers, and Acolytes remains rather sluggish.</p>
9. Children and young people	<p>Liturgies and Masses for the young of the parish, including the children in St John's Primary School, were held frequently, and now the children themselves have been taking a larger hand in arranging them.</p> <p>Twenty-six young people receiving the sacrament of confirmation. They receive catechesis from a team of parishioners. Catechesis of children being prepared for First Communion is also undertaken by parishioners under the supervision of Andrea Vieira.</p> <p>For the post-Confirmation group, see item 5 above.</p> <p>The great majority of youngsters, boys and girls, attending the parish Youth Club are not parishioners, although living locally.</p>
10. The elderly, the housebound and the homeless	<p>The Sunday Club, run by parish volunteers, continues to offer support to any local people who enjoy a little companionship and a simple meal.</p> <p>The parish clergy and professed Sisters make a priority of visiting parishioners in their home when they cannot get to church. They are assisted by a small number of Eucharistic Ministers bringing Holy Communion to the housebound.</p> <p>Better networking with other local Christian organisations would be beneficial.</p>

<p>11. Parish buildings</p>	<p>Work on the Baptistry has been completed and the flooring has been restored.</p> <p>Damage done to statues in the church by visitors with mental health issues has necessitated locking the main body of the church, leaving access only to the lobby for those wishing to pray before the Blessed Sacrament. The statues date from the 19th century and are fragile; however all but one have been skilfully repaired and are covered by our insurance.</p> <p>There were also several incidences of graffiti scrawled on the church doors and steps, quickly remedied by the local Council.</p> <p>The Church Bell has been restored so we now have the Angelus rung out three times a day. However, urgent restoration work is needed on the church façade, the roof and the apse, as also on the presbytery, but these must await a survey and then sufficient funding. Meanwhile the access ramp has been renovated.</p> <p><u>The Fr George Haines Centre</u>, is in constant use for parish outreach projects, including the Sunday Club and the St John's Youth Centre. Hiring out the Centre for social occasions could yield the parish some extra income, but the decision has been deferred until it has in its turn benefited from some necessary restoration. Meanwhile a group of young volunteers working for a local firm, Wilmot Dixon, have repainted the walls in the Centre under their Corporate Social Responsibility programme.</p> <p>The Youth Centre has seen to providing some new equipment for the kitchen.</p> <p>Wheelchair access from the school playground will be organised once funding is in place.</p>
<p>12. Finance and fundraising</p>	<p>The Parish Council has benefited from having Charles Wood as councillor while also sitting on the Finance and Fundraising sub-committee. Issues regarding funding are covered in their Annual Report. It is likely that a substantial fundraising programme will need to be undertaken in the Parish towards the likely costs of the renovations</p> <p>The Parish has not met its allotted target in the "Growing in Faith" diocesan fundraising project, therefore we cannot claim back surplus funds which we were hoping to allocate to a paid catechist.</p> <p>It is likely that the Quinquennial Survey of the church, presbytery and buildings, now to be carried out, will involve substantial costs for the Parish.</p> <p>The separate report from the Finance and Fundraising Sub-Committees is available.</p>
	<p>_____ Mgr Séamus O'Boyle, Parish Priest</p> <p>_____ Michael Fletcher, Chairman of Parish Council</p> <p>_____ Guido Waldman, Secretary of Parish Council</p> <p style="text-align: right;">March 2016</p>