



Catholic Parish of St Francis Xavier - St Clare  
In the Franciscan tradition

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE  
PARISH OF ST FRANCIS XAVIER – ST CLARE  
2<sup>nd</sup> August 2020  
MINUTES**

**Meeting opened at 11:15 am**

1. **Fr. Tony Kerin**, Parish Priest opened the meeting with an Introduction to the use of ZOOM features and acknowledged the people of the Wurundjeri Land.
2. Fr. Tony said the Opening Prayer, (copy attached) and said that the Whitehorse Blessing Video has been uploaded to the Parish YouTube page and Facebook. The video is just over 7 minutes long and the song was written especially for the video with 25 churches in the Whitehorse area involved in the production of the video.
3. **Parishioners were welcomed**, and apologies accepted.
4. **Jennifer Micheli**, Chair of the Parish Council welcomed and introduced members of the Parish Pastoral Council who were in attendance.
5. **Minutes of the last AGM** dated Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> August 2019 were confirmed.
6. **There was no business arising** from the minutes of the Previous AGM.
7. **The 2019-2020 Annual Report was tabled.**
8. **Fr Tony tabled his report** as read and advised parishioners to refer to the Annual Report. He also gave special thanks to Sylvia Soares and Alicia Cleary in printing the reports and all those who have contributed to the reports in such a timely manner so that it could be collated and printed well in advance of the meeting.

He paid tribute to the resilience, generosity, and faithfulness of the parishioners of St Francis Xavier and St Clare for their response to these unprecedented times. It has demanded a change of direction for lots of things we do and a rethinking of our life.

Fr Tony mentioned the progress we have made behind the scenes through Whitehorse Churches Care. The relief we have offered to International students who received meals from Whitehorse Churches. Some students do not qualify for government assistance and they are being trapped here because they are unable to go home.

St Vincent De Paul have also been continually active in the Whitehorse community.

Fr Tony mentioned Brother Edward Teye from Divine Word Missionaries who has completed his studies and will be ordained as Deacon early next year. Edward was due to take a pastoral placement in our parish next week, but COVID-19 has prevented his arrival. After his Ordination as Deacon, he will continue working in our parish till his Priestly Ordination at the end of 2021 or early 2022. Parishioners may remember him singing in our choir at the 10.15am Mass. Edward is from Ghana, and he will be coming to live and work in our parish as soon as the lock-

down finishes. He will participate in RCIA, the Youth group and Choir and will join the RCIA meeting via Zoom next Tuesday.

There has been a huge jump in social media activity on our site, an increase of 165% from the previous month with 95 people liking our page, 3852 engaged with is up 80% from the previous month. Mass has been uploaded onto our YouTube channel and while we have 53 subscribers, we need 100 to change the address of the channel to something more meaningful.

9. **Jennifer tabled her report** as read and asked parishioners to refer to the report. She thanked Fr Tony for doing a magnificent job which had allowed parishioners to attend Mass, tune in to the midday Masses and weekend Masses. She also thanked the Office staff, Sylvia and Alicia who are always willing to assist. Jennifer finished by thanking parishioners for the marvellous way they have volunteered for the various ministries during live streaming. There have been very few problems, due to our parishioner's patience and being good sports.

10. **Report from Principle of St Francis Xavier Primary School.** Steve Bellesini was not in attendance, and Fr Tony tabled the report as read. He mentioned that Steve has retired, and Catherine Wells is the acting Principal. The school is in the process of advertising for the position of Principal for next year.

Fr Tony introduced Catherine and she said that the enrolment figure for Prep next year is a healthy 38 and COVID-19 has caused a lot of disruption with enrolments. Some parents are keeping their children at Kinder another year. In closing Catherine said that it is the priority of the school to keep staff and students safe during this time.

11. **Fr Tony commented on the Financial Report** which he said will be quite different from this year. However, the parish is still solvent, and this is due to the good work of Charlie Mellican and Luisa May who keep us on track financially.

12. **General discussion.** A parishioner asked if passing the plate for collection will resume. Fr Tony said that due to the risk of contamination the practise of passing the plate may become obsolete when Mass with a congregation resumes.

Fr Tony commented that the quality of music during our livestream Masses has been highly regarded by a number of parish priests from other parishes and people from other parishes who also follow us. Credit goes to Asher Watters-Cowan, Director of Music, and the singing of Merryn Hughes, Allegra Salinas-Byrne and Anthony Wright. We are most grateful to them.

Evelyn Ogilby, RCIA coordinator, asked parishioners to keep all the RCIA members in their prayers. Baptisms have been postponed and the members are disappointed. Private baptism will be offered as an option. She also thanked Sylvia and Alicia in supporting the RCIA group.

Milan Poropat thanked Jennifer for her leadership of the Parish Council.

Dominic Amato was thanked for his stellar contribution to the Bible studies group in the parish for over 30 years

Fr Bob Matthews commented that is extraordinary that parish life has continued under such difficult circumstances. Such leadership in our parish and people willing join in. This is commendable he said.

A parishioner thanked Catherine and the team that is looking after our school in such a difficult time.

A parishioner commented how the use of zoom and Facebook has allowed them to continue to be connected.

Trish Poropat and Jennifer commented that phoning our older parishioners by volunteers during COVID-19 has been rewarding and parishioners are grateful for the phone calls. Some of them are struggling, however, new friends have been made.

Sylvia from our parish office thanked everyone for their support.

Alicia from our parish office remarked that it has been challenging. The office is now focusing on getting the Working with Children Check (WWCC) up to speed.

Deacon Brian Muling commented he was able to meet a lot of parishioners when he first arrived back in February, but since then COVID-19 has prevented a lot of work being done. Nevertheless, it is a good time to pray, especially for our parishioners and for people working at the front line. He praised Jennifer and her team's effort in making the front garden of the Parish House look so wonderful. He applauded the efforts of Fr Tony and Fr Jossy Kizhakkethalackal for the work they have done.

Fr Jossy has been busy celebrating Mass. He thanked Fr Tony, Deacon Brian, parish staff and the parishioners for their support. Special thanks to those people who help on the livestream Masses.

Asher said at the moment we are not able to reach the full quality and participation that we used to have. However, because of lock-down, we have been given the opportunity to look at some different repertoire that we might otherwise not be able to explore. Hopefully, we will continue building on our new music repertoire after the lock-down.

13. **Fr Tony thanked everyone** for their attendance and good work and acknowledged some may not have been able to join the meeting due to the NBN outage in some areas.

14. **Fr. Tony closed the meeting** with a prayer at 12: 00 pm.

Prepared by Queenie Lee