

Our Lady of the Valleys Parish



Annual Report
2019

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Agenda for Annual General Meeting

4th August 2019 2:00pm

Pettit Centre Heretaunga

- † Welcome
- † Opening Prayer
- † Present / Apologies
- † Accepting of Minutes of 2018 AGM
- † Tabling / Acceptance of the Annual Reports
(including Annual Financial Returns)
 - Matters Arising from Annual Report
- † Elections of New Parish Councillors
- † General Business
- † Closing Prayer
- † Afternoon Tea

Opening Prayer

Reader: Lord as we prepare to begin our meeting
We recall your promise to be present
When two or three are gathered in your name.
We know that without you here among us
And within each one of us
We will labour in vain.

All: Unite us, Lord, in your Spirit

Reader: We rejoice that we are blessed and called together
To work in your name.
We pray that we will respond generously
To this opportunity to serve you
And that we will grow in our Christian calling.

All: Unite us, Lord, in your Spirit.

Reader: Inspire us with your Spirit of wisdom
Plant seeds of your vision in our hearts and minds
Give us humour and give us humility
In our working with one another
So that we may know the privilege of participating
In the coming of your kingdom

All: Unite us, Lord, in your Spirit

**All: It is our hope that the business of this meeting
will be our spiritual transformation
and the transformation of others through us
and not simply the accomplishment
of tasks and projects.
We ask this of you as we now begin
In the name of the Father, and of the Son
And of the Holy Spirit.**

Minutes of 2018 Annual General Meeting

29th July 2018



Present: Fr Tony Kearns Parish Priest, John Benvenuti, Parish Council Chair, and Michael Jonassen, Parish Council Secretary.

Pauline Benvenuti, Judy Connolly, Joey Domdom, Jovena Fernandez (Parish Secretary), Conor Healy, Chris Henley, Gordon Holmes, Linda Holmes, and Terry Kavanagh (St Vincent de Paul), Margaret Lanigan, Nick Lee-Frampton, Heather O'Brien and Terry O'Brien (Passionist Home Group Leaders), Doreen O'Hagan, Tony Packer, Jennifer Rodricks, Trevor Rodricks, Veronica Sawers (Principal St Brendan's School), Gerald Scanlan, Geraldine Sims, Joan Thom, and Roger Wasson Chair (Parish Finance Committee).

The Meeting started with an Opening Prayer read by Fr Tony Kearns. A Welcome to all was extended by John Benvenuti - Chair.

Apologies were recorded for Sally Armitage, John O'Malley, Allan Thom, Chris Wasson, Pru von Keisenberg, and Barry Yandle.

Matters arising from 2017 Meeting

Incorrect spelling in a surname and a matter relating to transport raised since dealt with were raised. A further question was over the availability of organists - there are four who attend at St Francis Xavier can play elsewhere on request - e.g. as Stella Stowers already does at the Home of Compassion.

Following these discussions, the 2018 Report was passed these points having been noted and replied to.

Discussions re Tabled 2018 Annual Report

Mass counts - that requested results from the next ones be published in Parish Bulletins. Father Tony outlined reasons for variations in the numbers whereas the precise detail was not at hand for comparisons between last count completed (which was informal and arranged at Parish Council request) and the earlier official count. Pressed further on this question (recalling later Parish Council business) the Chair response was that no conclusions were drawn on the strength of the evidence at that time.

Finance Committee Report

Questions from the floor concerned the losses due to multiple burglaries involving collection monies, and damage to property through break in at both churches - with all the

ensuing administrative upheaval this caused - what preventative steps had been taken and suggestions offered what further security action might need to be considered.

Roger Wasson speaking to these issues advised that Police have located the alleged offender and as a result of the burglaries efforts have been made to encourage parishioners using envelopes for Planned Giving to move to means of automatic payment to the Parish Bank Account.

In response to taking this from the floor, as a further step it was suggested that a draw with a prize of a gift vouchers e.g. tickets to Lighthouse cinema might be an added incentive in that direction - a matter for the new Parish Council to consider.

Due to continued concerns the security arrangements it was also proposed that security arrangements should be revisited and this was accepted by the meeting - examples were alarms and security cameras.

The amount of the weekly collection has declined where Parish running costs continue to rise due to age and maintenance costs of the buildings and the bugbear of inflation and there has been a significant deficit in the operating budget that needs to be addressed.

An appeal is made to parishioners to review their Planned Giving amounts since if the level of donation remains static over time finances will deteriorate even further. A cup of coffee at a cafe costs \$5 if such an increase in the donation is affordable it would help to ease the squeeze on Parish finances.

Election of New Parish Committee members

There are five vacancies due to retirements and a resignation received during the 2017 term and there are five nominations as follows

Returning council members whose appointment term has expired - John O'Malley and Pru von Keisenberg and

New nominations for Conor Healy (present and introduced) and Victoria Aukusitino and Tiana Sio who were absent.

There being five vacancies and five nominations it was moved, and seconded those be accepted and these nominees were declared elected.

General Business

An amount of approximately \$4000 the residue of monies raised for El Pozon fund which has been wound up has been remitted to the agency in the United States to support two nuns engaged in Missionary work in Lima and Peru. (Tony Packer).

Mission Statements Father Tony speaking to - there have been two Mission Statements needing to be combined into one for the Parish and from discussions around this piece of work it was resolved to look at changing the Parish logo and a number of sketches were prepared. Of these the Parish Council short listed two for thoughts and comment by parishioners. These were on display on the walls during the meeting for those in attendance to see when the meeting ended.

In conclusion before the closing prayer Father Tony thanked John Benvenuti who was retiring from the Committee for his work as on the Parish Council in various roles including Deputy Chair and Chair.

Parish Council 2018-19



Dear Parishioners

Current Parish Council members are Prudence von Keisenberg (Chairperson), Mike Dench (Deputy Chair), Tony Kearns (PP) Conor Healey (minutes), John O'Malley, Michael Jonnassen, Tino Aukusitino, Tiana Sio, Victoria Aukusitino (resigned due to recent move to Auckland)

The Parish Council year started with the commissioning of our new Parish Council and Councillors at a special Mass at St Francis Xavier.

The 2018-2019 year has provided the Council with many topics of great importance to work through.

To assist parishes in their implementation of synod outcomes the Archdiocesan Parish Council circulated a Parish Self Review Resource. The Council selected five topics from the thirteen outcomes "Haere tukuna ... Go you are sent" and asked parishioners for their feedback via an on-line or paper-based survey. We had sixty-one respondents. Respondents identified "Building Community" as the first priority. Information outlining the results of the survey have been circulated in the parish newsletter. A subsequent meeting was called to find volunteers to assist the council implement ideas.

A Pastoral letter from the Cardinal highlighted challenges faced by parishes. Earthquake resilience issues, reduced number of priests. The letter contains a directive to undertake a review of churches and presbyteries, their locations as well as mass counts and demographics. The Parish Council has carried out research on demographics and ministries. The finance committee researched buildings. Thank you to Tony Condor for his huge contribution to the collection of information about buildings. The data collection phase has been completed and is available for parishioner's consideration at a meeting that will be held (or was held on ...). The results of the review with developed proposals are to be submitted to the Cardinal by 30th October 2019.

The Council has attended, a Safe Guarding workshop as an initial step in ensuring that OLOV parish has relevant documentation and a full awareness of safe practices for the protection of children and vulnerable adults. The Parish Council will continue to work with advisers to ensure all policies and procedures are in place at OLOV and that parishioners understand that Safeguarding applies to volunteers as well as to employees and priests.

Euthanasia debate has been an issue that councillors have been involved in. We take this opportunity thank the numerous parishioners who have responded to the Catholic Bishops

call to make submissions and voice opposition to the EOLC Bill. Feedback assures us that your voices have/ did made a difference.

November 2018, the Council held a reunion mass for the First Communion group. The children's participation in the mass was the central focus of the event which was extremely well attended. This has led to parents asking for more masses with a focus on and liturgy for children. Again, on parental request we have implemented a family mass once a term whereby, children are fully involved. Josephine Eynon, Stella Wadsworth and Mike Fairfield have supported the initiative through fortnightly visits to St Brendan's to teach the children hymns that their music group use during Sunday masses. Every endeavour is made to ensure the family mass is held on a day Josephine's music group is playing. The Liturgy committee have taken over the organisation of Family masses. Members of the Parish Council are readily available to assist with this organisation.

On completion of consultation with parishioners a new logo for OLOV has been implemented and appears on OLOV letter head and our website. Thank you to Terry and Judy Connelly of TS Signs for their expertise and generous donation of time in bringing the design of the new logo to fruition. New signage outside both churches is in the pipeline.

As a consequence of the 2017/2018 burglaries the Parish Council participated in the Restorative Justice process.

The Council has continued to work with the Finance Committee, Liturgy Committee and St Brendan's School to keep general communication open and an awareness of what was going on. The Council supports the work of the Youth Group that is based at St Francis Xavier and acknowledges and thanks them for their contribution to the parish.

Over the last year we have had two major fund raisers: A Quiz Night at St Brendan's School and a Car boot sale in the carpark of St Francis Xavier church which have been successful in raising funds.

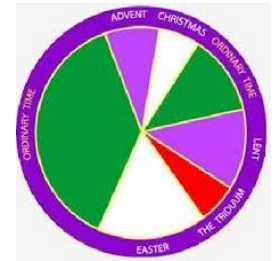
A highlight of the year was Father Tony's birthday celebration which we held on the lawn by Our Lady of Grace Church. The function was well very attended with parishioners enjoying the summer sun, sharing a picnic, a BBQ and Samoan food while mixing and mingling. Volley ball was enjoyed by young and old and the bouncy castle a hit with the children. A great time was had by all.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Father Tony for his guidance, my Deputy Chair Mike Dench, Conor Healy, minute secretary and all other members of the council for their work on the many difficult issues we have faced over the past year. Thank you to all. God Bless

Prue von Keisenberg

Chairperson,
Parish Council

Liturgy Committee Report 2018-19



Dear Fellow Parishioners,

The Liturgy Committee meets every fourth Thursday of the month in St. Francis Xavier or Our Lady of Grace meeting rooms. Along with Father Tony Kearns, our Parish Priest, we plan for the special feast days and celebrations that are an integral part of the calendar year of the Catholic Church in New Zealand.

The Catholic Centre provides a wide variety of courses and workshops to support our own spiritual knowledge and development. This year the workshops that we attended were facilitated by Father Patrick Bridgeman and Michael Mangin. The Catholic Centre also provides musical, visual and liturgical related resources which support us as we plan for the various Liturgical Celebrations.

The main Liturgical Events during the year are Easter, Pentecost and Christmas. The Liturgy Committee seeks the assistance from our fellow parishioners to take on the many roles and ministries within the parish. These include: Sacristans, Greeters, Leaders, Readers, Writers of Prayers of the Faithful, Children's Liturgy Leaders, Altar Servers, Extra-ordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, music groups and choirs, etc.

We are very aware of the special character of each of the two parish churches. There are times when we come together as one parish, in one location to celebrate special feast days such as: All Souls Day, All Saints, Assumption, or special Liturgical Celebrations such as: Easter and Christmas Reconciliations, First Reconciliation, Confirmation, First Holy Communion, and Children/Family Masses.

At these times every attempt is made to allocate the Liturgical Celebrations in an equitable manner between the two churches. The Liturgy Committee plans the Sunday Masses, and we also provide opportunities for training the various parish ministries in their roles. At times this has involved inviting experts to present workshops, or fellow parishioners, who have experience and expertise to present the required training in the targeted areas where further training is required, and as new people take on new ministries.

Our Lady of the Valleys Liturgy Committee is a very small group of committed parishioners, who would like to take this opportunity to thank our fellow parishioners for their generous support that we receive from those who share their talents, time and treasures for our Liturgical Celebrations. We would welcome anyone who would like to join us in planning and delivering these important Liturgical Celebrations, or the other parish ministries who also serve our parish.

Liz McCaul,

**Chair
Liturgy Committee**

Finance Committee 2018-19



The Finance Committee is made up of Roger Wasson (Chair), Jennifer Rodricks (Secretary), Fr Tony Kearns, Terry O'Brien, Debby Morgan, Colin Braddock, Tony Condor and Patrick Krippner.

During the year 2018-19 our Treasurer Alan Thoms and Tara Quinney resigned from the Committee for personal reasons.

The Committee is charged with the with ensuring that Our Lady of the Valleys Parish is properly funded in terms of facilities, and staff. We work with the Parish Council, to provide financial advice where and when required and safe guard and maintain the Parish asset.

The Committee continued to oversee the maintenance of the two church properties and also the hall at Stokes Valley that is currently leased to the Koranui Marae.

It is pleasing to see that more people are using the Automatic Payment option or Direct Credit process options for providing funding of the Parish, thus reducing the amount of cash held on the premises and streamlining the administration process of recording parishioner giving.

During the past twelve months a number of issues have been addressed by the Committee some internal and some external. One of the major external issues that have been discussed at Finance meetings was the increasing of insurance on the parish property holdings (as a result of information provided by the Finance Department of the Archdiocese. This has led to a review on the level of natural disaster coverage as the cost was projected to be close to \$20,000 per year.

Another issue taking a proportion of the last few meetings has been the review of churches and presbyteries held by parish called by Cardinal Dew in February. While the process is being spearheaded by the Pastoral Council, the Finance Committee has been provided information and advise on costs and revenue and undertaken a detailed review of the properties and building of the Parish to allow the Parish Council to have up to date information regarding the state of the buildings and costs of running the Parish.

The Annual Financial Report for the year ending 31st March 2109 forms part of this Annual Pastoral Report. A summary of significant information from this report are

Excess of Income over Expenditure

This Gain includes a non-cash charge for Depreciation on Fixed Assets of \$7,917 for the year 24,811

Net Cash Inflows/(Outflows)

619

Nett Assets

This is total assets owned by the Parish less the amount of liabilities owed by the Parish 1.44.983

CDF Loan

This is remaining balance outstanding that was borrowed to cover the cost of refurbishing the Presbytery at Heretaunga and earthquake strengthening of Our Lady of Grace Church 25.166

Total Funds gifted by Parishioners

148,364

Insurance Costs

12,508

Archdiocesan Levies

These provide funding to the Archdiocese of Wellington to cover costs of running the Archdiocese **19,079**

Clergy Support

This is the amount the Parish pays to support the Clergy of the Archdiocese both those in active ministry and those who have retired from active ministry **43,011**

CDF Loan repayments made

32,202

Interest Paid on CDF Loan

2,204

Roger Wasson

**Chairman
Finance Committee**

Catholic Women's League 2018-19

Membership at Heretaunga Branch of Catholic Women's League remains around thirty with a few new members joining us this year. Sadly, though, in recent months four of our longest-serving most loyal members have died--



Mary Fouhy, Joan Patton, Janice Browne and Brenda Ryan.

As usual we have been fundraising to support various charities, such as the Upper Hutt Housing Trust, St Brendan's School, sponsorship for an up-and-coming singer, the Sisters of Compassion and a donation towards lunches at a Stokes Valley school.

This year our big fundraiser was an Easter Raffle--two, in fact. One at Stokes Valley and the other at Heretaunga. We are very grateful for the parishioners at OLOV who are always so willing to support us in many ways.

As well as fundraising there are other opportunities to be involved in the Parish too. We recently made soup for the children at St Brendan's School, we've provided the cups of tea at funerals and we're on the roster for the cafe after 10.30am Mass. We still have some busy knitters supporting "Little Sprouts" with their baby knitting and also donating slippers, hats and gloves to some low-decile schools.

One of our favourite regular "events" involving the Parish is the Wednesday morning-tea at 10am at the Silverstream Bakery. Don't forget--it's every last Wednesday of the month and everyone's welcome!

In June we were delighted to be able to share an outing with some of the parishioners. In spite of the miserable day more than forty happy passengers enjoyed a bus trip to the Home of Compassion Island Bay. It has been suggested it could be an annual pilgrimage! With thanks and blessings to all who have supported us.

Chris Wasson

President

Filipino Community

(Community for the Holy Family)



The Community for the Holy Family is a small group of families who regularly come together to pray as a community and offer service in the parish. Bound by Catholic Faith within the context of being migrants, the community endeavours to provide opportunity and space to express and experience one's faith as a migrant.

The Community for the Holy Family is relatively new in its involvement in the Our Lady of the Valleys Parish. The involvement itself is still very limited to providing music in the Mass every fourth Sunday of the month at the Our Lady of Grace church. The community is truly grateful to the parish to be allowed to use the Pettit Centre for their prayers and choir practices every 4th Saturday of the month from 5:00-7:30pm.

While there is the desire to serve in the various ministries, especially around support provision for new migrants living within the parish, a number of community members are currently and actively involved in other groups in the Archdiocese like the Filipino Chaplaincy Pastoral Council, ADW Committee on Poverty and Upper Hutt Filipino Choir among others.

The community, however, will keep on providing music for the 4th Sunday Mass, and will support initiatives and programmes that build up stronger presence and participation of migrants and the poor in the parish life.

John Domdom

Leader

Overflow Youth Group



For the past 12 months the Youth of our Parish have come together on several occasions to grow in faith and fellowship. Current members of the Parish youth are mainly made up of the Samoan youth from St Francis Xavier Church.

At the beginning of last year, the youth with the Samoan youth at St Francis Xavier started Lectio Divina after 8:30am Mass on the 1st, 3rd and 5th Sunday of each month. I heard concerns from fellow members that there was a need to grow and reflect together as youth on the word of God and also have space to listen to God. Lectio Divina saw youth opening up and sharing upon Scripture and seeing how the Word of God relates to them now in their lives. We continue to have Lectio Divina on the 1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays of the month (if the Samoan Youth have other matters to attend Lectio Divina is usually postponed). The youth are also involved in church cleaning, church maintenance at St Francis Xavier church grounds and serving of morning tea at the end of 8:30am Mass every Sunday rain or shine.

On the 17th of Feb of this year we had the Parish picnic which we also celebrated Father Tony's 60th (21st lol...) birthday where the Youth of our Parish came together and organised a dance item which was performed on the day. The weather was amazing, great variety of different food, music and dance, a lot of cake but most importantly the fellowship of Parishioners just having a great time. It was the 2nd time our youth attended the Parish picnic, as the 1st one held back in 2017, the youth had to leave early as they had to attend another Mass. This year the picnic was filled with joy, laughter and saw the youth mingling with other parishioners and even got into a game of tug of war and a few sets of Volley ball. A great highlight was the one on one tug of war between Father Kevin and Father Tony but then everyone jumped in to help.

Our recent activities as a youth would have to be Worship night. Our youth hosted the 1st Worship night in the Parish on Mar 30th at St. Francis Xavier church at 7:30pm. This particular worship night was prompted by our Lenten journey and also the tragic shootings in Christchurch. A couple of members shared about how we needed to come together to pray for peace in our country and the world but to also invite our faith community to gather and worship God as we journey through lent. To worship through song and prayer so that it may be a night of deep encounter with the Lord. The Theme was 'Seek and you will be found' inspired by Matt 7:7 The Worship night was led by our newly formed worship band/team (Tiana Sio-vocals, Kone Launiuvao-Bass, Lagi Aukusitino & Anna-Marie Sio-guitar and vocals, Tasi Launiuvao - data projector/keyboard and Barbara Aukusitino-keyboard) who only met 3 times to prepare for the night. As the worship team prepared for the night, we also had help from one of the parents who helped us in buying some of the band equipment and helped us set up which truly helped us and for that we are

grateful. It was definitely a spirit filled night where the assembly were able to truly have their own space to worship God through song and prayer.

At the beginning of worship night, a piece of coloured paper and pen were given out to everyone. Mid-way during the night the worship team invited everyone to jot write down on the piece of paper what was troubling them, and offer everything that was on their heart to Jesus on the cross. When they were ready, they walked up and physically pinned it to the cross. During that time there was also a prayer team available for those who needed prayer. The night concluded with a blessing from Father Tony. We took photos with those who were able to stay behind and then there were light refreshments and fellowship afterwards.

What's new / upcoming events:

What's new is that the youth of our Parish is now named OVERFLOW. Some youth members commented that the name Our Lady of the Valleys Parish Youth was too long, especially when people asked about our youth group and what we were called. We then discussed that we wanted a name that the Parish youth can identify with, so as agreed by the youth Overflow was born.

We chose Overflow knowing that from our Baptism we were adopted into God's family and with that God's grace, love and mercy is continually overflowing over us. As the streams run through the valley our mission as the youth of our Parish (OLOV) is to overflow with the guidance of the Holy Spirit to show Christ's love, compassion, joy and service to all we encounter. OVERFLOW aims to provide a space and community where our teens and young adults feel safe to grow and fellowship together in faith and draw closer to Christ. Though young we too are to learn from our elders, to bridge the gap between young and old and journey together and share life with one another so that we are able to utilise our God given gifts to serve our Parish and local communities together - OVERFLOW!!!

Below I have copy and pasted a couple of quotes from Pope Francis' *POST-SYNODAL APOSTOLIC EXHORTATION CHRISTUS VIVIT "Christ Lives"* which contributed to the new name and mission statement of our Parish youth.

(199) If we journey together, young and old, we can be firmly rooted in the present, and from here, revisit the past and look to the future. To revisit the past in order to learn from history and heal old wounds that at times still trouble us. To look to the future in order to nourish our enthusiasm, cause dreams to emerge, awaken prophecies and enable hope to blossom. Together, we can learn from one another, warm hearts, inspire minds with the light of the Gospel, and lend new strength to our hands.

(201) During the Synod, one of the young auditors from the Samoan Islands spoke of the Church as a canoe, in which the elderly help to keep on course by judging the position of the stars, while the young keep rowing, imagining what waits for them ahead. Let us steer clear of young people who think that adults represent a

meaningless past, and those adults who always think they know how young people should act. Instead, let us all climb aboard the same canoe and together seek a better world, with the constantly renewed momentum of the Holy Spirit.

Upcoming Events (to put in calendars):

- † Saturday 18th of May 7pm - 9pm: Fellowship evening @ Petit Centre
- † Friday 24th of May 7.30: Worship night. Theme 'I AM HERE' @ St. Francis Xavier church followed by light refreshments and fellowship.

We are so excited and intrigued as we wait in anticipation of what God has planned for OVERFLOW. We will be posting upcoming events on social media via our Facebook and instagram pages (so keep watching these spaces)

Facebook:overflow-olov (will have the Parish logo)

Instagram:@_overflowolov

You can also get in touch via our email: overflow31032019@gmail.com

We are currently seeking people who have a passion in working with youth in our Parish. Who will be willing to offer their gifts and are able to commit to being part of the core/leadership team. If anyone feels called to join our core/leadership team at OVERFLOW please contact Barbara using the overflow email address or mobile 027 351 4620.

Blessings,

Barbara Aukusitino

Youth Co-ordinator

Passionist Family Groups



Family groups continue to provide opportunities each month for Catholics and non-Catholics to meet together for friendship and to strengthen the connections between people. The motto is "A family for all". Anyone is most welcome to join a group. Details of the six groups in our parish are on the notice boards in the foyers of both churches.

Last year in 2018, we celebrated 25 years of the Passionist Family Group Movement in our parish with a special service, a shared lunch and a birthday cake. Both Heretaunga and Stokes Valley churches started Passionist Family Groups in 2003.

Activities are low cost and always involve food! Where possible we meet in homes, as well as at the Pettit Centre, the Presbytery and various outings around the Wellington area. Train and bus trips, car rallies, picnics, beach and bush walks, cafes, House Masses, High Teas, and movies are some events we enjoy.

The Passionist Family Groups organise the Parish lunch in July and the Melbourne Cup Night in November, and we enjoyed Father Tony's 60th birthday picnic for our February event.

Thanks, as always, to Father Tony for his wonderful support for the Passionist Family Group Movement in our parish.

Contact the Parish Office, a Group coordinator, or Terry and Heather O'Brien for more information.

Terry and Heather O'Brien

Passionist Family Group Co-ordinators

Samoan Community



Our Lady of the Valleys Parish is fortunate in that we have not one but two Samoan communities operating within the Parish, one based in Stokes Valley and the other in Heretaunga. These groups provide a rich and supportive cultural environment for the Samoan families in the Parish and share their cultural gifts and talents with the wider Parish family.

Stokes Valley Samoan Community

The Samoan Community here in Stokes Valley (known as the Aulotu), have two main groups that branch from this main community – the Samoan Aufaipese (Choir) and Samoan Autalavou (Youth). Our community is funny in the sense that the people who are in the Choir are also in the Youth and vice versa so although we are doing a certain activity as a choir (for example), you are most likely to encounter the same people if we were doing an activity as the youth

However, this past year has not been too different than previous years for our choir. We have choir practice every Wednesday 7pm and Saturday 2pm to prepare for the Sunday mass. Our choir sings every week at SFX at the Sunday 8.30am masses and whenever merged masses are held in SFX.

2018 was a year full of beginnings and firsts for the Samoan youth. When long-time parishioners Geoff and Theresa left our parish, our Samoan youth, in collaboration with our Parish youth, have been organising and running our Morning Tea's after our 8.30am mass – rain or shine. We thought that it would be good to continue a legacy that both Geoff and Theresa had left for us and it has created a sense of fellowship amongst our community each Sunday. We also had the opportunity to participate in the Car Boot sale that was held at the St Francis Xavier carpark on the 24th November 2018. It was a great experience selling our \$5 suppers that consisted of sapaui and rice.

Spiritually, our youth started to attend the Lectio Divina – something that was a new concept for majority of our youths. Following from the Lectio Divina sessions, we trialed doing worship nights ourselves. We had a big obstacle of Worship nights being available but they were either scheduled in times that clashed with other schedules or were too far away and therefore had no (or not enough space) to travel to the worship night. As a result, we had two very meaningful and spirit-filled encounters with the spirit and ventured into unknown spiritual territory.

We also participated in the Good Friday Walk. The Good Friday Walk is a collaboration of participating Christian churches in the Stokes Valley community and like the Stations of the Cross; we travel to each church following the cross in commemoration for what was to happen later that day. This year, our church was the last in the programme and our youth and aulotu helped prepare the refreshments following the conclusion of the walk. We got to introduce the SV Christian community into our church and got to meet different people who share the same love for our Lord. Our youth are currently in the process of planning a cultural exchange with a fellow catholic youth group in Auckland so looking forward to what happens in result of the planning!

As an aulotu, we have started to maintain the grounds around our church here in Stokes Valley. Each family brings whatever they can offer and get down to work. Rain or shine, we gather at the church in early hours of the chosen Saturday morning and start the upkeep of the grounds. Our work includes a range of jobs – mowing the grass, pruning trees and even water-blasting. We also church clean whenever one of the families in the aulotu is rostered to church clean.

Finally, every fourth Sunday of the month at 11.30am, we celebrate mass in the Samoan language as we are a part of the Wellington Samoan Chaplaincy. It is a very important privilege and honour to have the opportunity to celebrate mass in our native tongue and it is an integral part to our activities as an aulotu.



St Brendan's School



We are “an inspirational Catholic school that challenges students to be the best that they can be, whilst walking hand in hand with Christ”. At St Brendan's our values of: Faith, Love, Respect, Courage, Innovation and Excellence are represented in all that we do.

In 2018 our over-riding Catholic Social Justice principle was 'Human Dignity', and in 2019 it is 'Human Equality'. Our students have the opportunity to join our Catholic Character group and participate in annual retreats while developing as navigators, adventurers and missionaries.

We have been delighted to have so many opportunities to interact with our Parish community. We list just some of these key activities:

- Beginning and End of School Year Masses, and termly Powhiri.
- Commissioning Mass for Catholic School staff.
- Ash Wednesday and Assumption of Mary Masses.
- St Brendan's Day Mass.
- Regular Friday Mass schedule continues with students taking an active part.
- Liturgy for Grandparents and a Giving Gratitude Liturgy.
- Easter candle drawing competition.
- School-wide Stations of the Cross.
- Fundraising for Caritas.
- Parish volunteers supporting with music for school Masses.
- Weekly St Vincent de Paul collection.
- Connecting with local retirement villages.
- Student Council initiatives to connect with our community.
- Encounter with Christ self-review.
- Sacramental programme.
- Celebrating Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.
- Strengthening links with our neighbouring Catholic schools.

We celebrated New Zealand's Catholic Schools Day, Tuesday 28 May, starting with Mass at Our Lady of Grace. We warmly welcomed: Jenny Gordon, Vicar for Education, Archdiocese of Wellington; Principals, colleagues and students from St Patrick's College Silverstream and St Joseph's Upper Hutt, together with families, parishioners; and all staff and students from St Brendan's.

We joined together to celebrate a day on which we remembered all the things that are done in the name of Jesus and for which we can be grateful. We welcomed our St Joseph's Year 1 to 4 students to St Brendan's; our Year 5 to 8 students felt the warm welcome at St Joseph's Upper Hutt. A small group of students from all three schools shared their musical talents at the Home of Compassion.

The 2019 theme:

Kia rangiwhawhatia ta te Karaiti karanga: kia aroha, kia tutua, kia mahi.

Extending Christ's Call: to love, to be, to do.

Thank you to our supportive Parish community and Fr Tony. Our students, families and staff acknowledge and are grateful for your many contributions.

Veronica Sawers

Principal

St Vincent de Paul Society

Our Lady of the Valleys Parish is blessed to have two St Vincent de Paul Conferences working in the Parish, one centred in Heretaunga and the other in Stokes Valleys.



Each in their own way strive to follow the ideals of the Society to provide support for the less fortunate members of our Parish family and also the wider civic community.

St Vincent de Paul Society – Heretaunga

As Vincentians, our goal is to promote human dignity and justice through personal contact with those in need. In so doing, our own lives are enriched.



Our main focus is to visit families or individuals in their homes or residents at rest homes. This is often complemented by the supply of food parcels and transport. This year, we made about 100 visits, provided 20 food parcels, and 20 hours of transport help.

One of our members helped out regularly at the Stokes Valley shop.

We continue to supply non-perishable goods to the St John's food bank, thanks to donations received at Mass. These were supplemented by a regular and substantial contribution from St Brendan's School. In turn, we contributed financial help to a family attending camp.

We made up 35 Xmas Parcels comprising \$40 grocery vouchers plus a \$15 Warehouse voucher for each child and some other items. Once again, St Brendan's donated toiletries for the adults and toys for the children.

Our cause was very well promoted by associate members Frank and Pauline Quinn at a presentation made to pupils at the school. Since then, each class has taken it in turn to donate goods in the "blue box" at Mass.

During the year, we have helped six individuals or families by providing food vouchers, payment of power bills, petrol vouchers, furniture and appliances.

Our contact with those in need is generally through the regional office at the Petone shop while we have had requests this year from the Wellington City Mission and Te Omanga Hospice. Some seek help through Fr Tony.

Though small in numbers, we are united by faith in doing good works. You are very welcome to join us in serving those on the margins of society.

Terry Kavanagh

President

St Vincent de Paul Society – Stokes Valley

Stokes Valley St Vincent de Paul have had another busy year. We have a committee consisting of eight members. Four come from outside Stokes Valley. Our members are Win Lewer, Frances Williams, Chris Henley, Jan Fletcher, Frank Vailini, Lei Solia (Treasurer), Frances Cummings (Secretary), Gordon Holmes (President).



A large percentage of the Committee's work is the management of the shop in Scott Court. The shop generates money for people who need help either with food, furniture, or help with power bills etc.

We help in tandem with the Our Lady of Grace Branch in collecting, storing and transporting goods for refugee resettlement.

We have 22 volunteers who work in the shop. They work 3 hour shifts (we always can do with more volunteers) a huge thankyou to the volunteers who allow us to achieve what we do.

The Hutt Valley Particular Council operates a food delivery service to food banks in Wainuiomata and throughout the wider Hutt Valley.

Our Society in Stokes Valley provides the garage to store the van and produce, Frank Vailini manages this service with a team of volunteers.

We have donated funds to countries hit by disasters.

We take communion to residents of Stokeswood Rest Home once a week and have a healing mass once a month.

From March 2018 to March 2019 we have carried out

➤ ministering Holy Communion	309
➤ home visits	77
➤ meals	67
➤ hospital visits	13
➤ support at funerals	23
➤ food parcels	1074
➤ furniture deliveries	96
➤ Christmas hampers	38 families
➤ Children's Christmas presents	132



We thank all the wonderful people who donated goods to the shop and donated food parcels at our weekly masses we are truly blessed to have you all supporting our cause.

God bless you all,

Gordon Holmes

President

*"Let us do without hesitation whatever good lies at our hand"
(Frederic Ozanam) Founder of our SVdPS 1833*

Annual Financial Report

(Available from Parish Office)



Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father
as we come to the end of our time together
we thank you for what has been accomplished here today.

May the matters discussed
serve as a catalyst to move us forward
and cause us to advance
and see growth in all areas of our lives.

May we leave here
recognizing you are the God of all wisdom
and you are willing to lead us forward.

This we pray in the name of the Lord Jesus

Our Father

