

Our Lady of the Valleys Parish



Annual Report
2020

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Agenda for Annual General Meeting

30th August 2020

Pettit Centre Heretaunga

- † Welcome
- † Opening Prayer
- † Present / Apologies
- † Accepting of Minutes of 2019 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.**

Our Lady of the Valleys
Minutes of Annual General Meeting 2019
at Pettit Centre Heretaunga
4th August 2019
2:00 pm

Present:

Prue Von Keisenberg (Chair), Fr Tony Kearns, Conor Healy (Minutes), Roger Wasson, Michael Johansson, Patricia Byrne, Tony Packer, Barry Yandle, Darrell Mellow, Gordon Holmes, Linda Holmes, Terry O'Brien, Geraldine Sims, Bernie Hall, Jovena Fernandez, Margaret Lanigan, Judy Connolly, Josephine Eynon, John O'Malley, Veronica Sawers, Therese Anstiss, Doreen O'Hagan, Terry Kavanagh, Chris Henley, Vaughan Lloyd-Jones, Rita David, Fiona Vulu, Barbara Aukusitino, Lagi Aukusitino, Kevin Von Keisenberg

Welcome and introduction

Prue welcomed everyone

Opening Prayer (Reflection) read by all

Apologies:

Des and Claire Doyle, Pauline & John Benvenuti, Carol Robinson, Alan and Joan Tom, Pauline Lockyer

Minutes of 2018 AGM

Moved to approve: Margaret Lanigan

Seconded by: Chris Henley

Matters arising from minutes

Geraldine Sims raise the publication of mass counts; Fr Tony informed they have been done and unfortunately missed from the annual report and newsletter; however, they are on the website as part of the Churches and Presbyteries review; next mass count to be taken in November. Fr Tony also noted the one done in March was a bit skewed due to a large turn-out following the Christchurch mosque attack.

Vaughan Lloyd-Jones asked whether there was a percentage difference. Prue advised it was a consistent, slight drift downward trend

Michael Jonassen commented that the last count didn't include the Home of Compassion.

Roger Wasson provided an update on the burglaries; offender was caught and sentenced. Parish went through a restorative justice process.

Tabling / Acceptance of reports

Roger Wasson spoke to the Finance report: Advised Tony Condor has resigned, due to relocating to Wanganui. Tony did a lot of work for the Churches and Presbyteries review. Michael Jonassen asked that it noted a formal thanks to Tony for all his work.

Fr Tony commended all the many groups in the parish.

Election of new Parish Councillors

Prue first thanked all the out-going councillors for their service: Mike Dench, Judy Connolly, Victoria Aukusitino (who moved to Auckland during the year)

Four nominations received to join the council:

Michael Jonasson

Edward Fernando

Darrell Mellow

Lagi Aukusitino

General Business

Margaret Lanigan requested that a photo of Parish Council and Finance Committee be placed in the foyer of both churches.

Vaughan Lloyd-Jones asked whether the Parish had anything organised for outreach / deaconship. Lengthy discussion was had highlighting the various groups and services: These included Circle of Friendship, Men's Group, Catholic Woman League, St Vincent de Paul Society & shop, Overflow youth group, Prayer groups and the Passionist Family groups, World Day of Prayer, Stokeswood Home monthly Masses

Fr Tony asked everyone to get involved in the review process of the Cardinal directive, very important to have your say.

Closing prayer read by all and the meeting closed at 2:44pm

Parish Council Annual Report



Dear Parishioners

Current Parish Council members are Prudence von Keisenberg (Chairperson), John O'Malley (Deputy Chair), Fr Tony Kearns (PP), Conor Healey (Minutes), Michael Jonnassen, Tino Aukusitino, Tiana Sio, Lagi Aukusitino, Darrell Mellows, Edward Fernando

The Parish Council year commenced with the commissioning of our new Parish Council and Councillors at a special Mass at Our Lady of Grace.

The 2019-2020 year has provided the Council with many topics of great importance to work through.

The implementation of synod outcomes were put on hold as the Council focussed on the directive from the Cardinal to undertake a review of churches and presbyteries, their locations as well as mass counts and demographics.

The Parish Council carried out research on demographics and ministries. Parishioners were widely consulted with the Council holding four face to face meetings at SFX and four at Our Lady of Grace sites. On line consultation surveys were also available and well used by parishioners as a means of ensuring all viewpoints were taken into account. The finance committee researched information about our buildings. The data collection phase was completed and was available for parishioner's consideration at a meeting held in the Pettit Centre. The results of the review with developed proposals were submitted to the Cardinal by 30th October 2019. An eight page summary was released for parish members with a full copy of the report available on request. At time of writing this annual report we are awaiting clarification on a response from the Cardinal's Office.

COVID-19 saw the parish in lock down and parishioners using technology to access masses throughout NZ and the world. The Parish Council set up a well being phone tree and contacted a number of parishioners. Thank you to those who assisted with this. The council was busy forward thinking in preparation for changes in levels set by government regulations. Parishioners' co-operation and assistance in making the procedures we implemented work has been very much appreciated. A big 'Thank you' to you all. Thanks to Father Tony for circulating daily reflections and helping us all through this challenging time. A meeting for Parish Council chairs for the archdiocese saw a number of valuable learnings for parishes from lock down. One of the many learning was the necessity of having up to date technology equipment and facilities in parishes.

Our post COVID gathering, as a parish, was a celebration of Mass by Cardinal John on the 9th August at Our Lady of Grace, followed by morning tea at St Brendan's School hall. It was a wonderful way to be together again as a parish in fellowship and worship.

Parish Council members attended the second Safe Guarding workshop. Ensuring that Our Lady of the Valleys Parish has relevant documentation and a full understanding of safeguarding practices for the protection of children and vulnerable adults is essential. Policies and procedures are in place for the parish. The Cardinal has established a National Office of Professional Standards, A complaints Officer position and a Safeguarding Advisers role based at the Catholic Centre. The training advised that using The Ministry for Children (Oranga Tamariki) or Police are also options for referrals as are the facilities at the Catholic Centre. The Parish Council continues to work with advisers to ensure all policies and procedures remain current at Our Lady of the Valleys and that parishioners understand that Safeguarding applies to us all, volunteers as well as to employees and priests.

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 in the parish. 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.

The annual parish picnic was very attended with parishioners enjoying the summer sun, sharing a picnic, BBQ and Samoan food while mixing and mingling. A great time was had by all.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Father Tony for his guidance, my Deputy Chair John O'Malley, Conor Healy, Minute Secretary and all other members of the council for their work on the many challenging issues we have faced over the past year. Thank you to all.

God Bless

Prue von Keisenberg

**Chairperson,
Parish Council**

Liturgy Committee Report



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: Good Friday, Holy Thursday, Easter and Christmas Reconciliations, First Reconciliation, Confirmation, First Holy Communion, and Parish, Children/Family Masses. Family Masses or Parish Masses have taken place on Sunday morning at Our Lady of Grace Church. These Masses have been held each school term and parents or grandparents have been encouraged to support their child/children to undertake the various Sunday Ministries. Parishioners were invited to stay for morning tea after Mass and Conor Healy and Prue von Keisenberg have organised a team to set up sporting activities on the grass alongside the church.

During the planning process, for the various Liturgical Celebrations, every attempt is made to allocate these 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.

During the year, Pat Hault and John O'Malley led Parish workshops for Proclaimers of the Word, and Liturgy of the Word with Communion (visiting the sick), and Liturgy of the Word when Father is not present. Conor Healy continues to train the Altar Servers. Our Lady of the Valleys Liturgy Committee invited Ministers from St. Joseph's in Upper Hutt to also attend these workshops. All attendees found these workshops very informative and they provided opportunities for discussion.

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.

God Bless,

Liz McCaul,

**Chair
Liturgy Committee**

Finance Committee

The current Finance Committee is made up of the following people, Roger Wasson(chair), Fr Tony, Terry O'Brien, Colin Braddock, Patrick Krippner, Juan Balao, and Sylwia Szczeny.



During the course of the year the following people have left the Committee, Tony Condor, Debbie Morgan, Jennifer Rodricks and Maciej Szczesny for a variety of reasons.

Before leaving, Tony Condor, completed an in depth revue of all the parish properties, and for this we are very grateful.

On behalf of the parish, I wish to thank them for their contributions to the Finance Committee and the Parish.

The most notable event for the Finance Committee this year was that the mortgage for the refurbishment of the presbytery and the strengthening of the Heretaunga church was paid off, a number of years earlier than required.

The Committee continues to oversee the maintenance of the two church properties and also the hall at Stokes Valley that is licensed to the Koraunui Marae.

We, the Committee, continue to encourage parishioners to use Automatic Payment or Direct Credit options for providing funding of the Parish, thus reducing the amount of money held on the premises and streamlining the administration process of recording parishioners giving.

During the last financial year, because of the revenue of all of the parishes in the Archdiocese and the hold put on all but essential maintenance, there are some maintenance matters that will need to be addressed in the near future with some urgency.

Significant items of maintenance that the Finance Committee are looking to undertake in the next few years (depending on funding include)

The Annual Financial Report for the year ending 31st March 2020 forms part of this Annual Pastoral Report. A summary of significant information from this report are

Excess of Income over Expenditure	16,159.74
This Gain includes a non-cash charge for Depreciation on Fixed Assets of \$7,864 for the year	
Net Cash Inflows/(Outflows)	(541.55)
Nett Assets	1,161,142.59
This is total assets owned by the Parish less the amount of liabilities owed by the Parish	
CDF Loan	NIL
The CDF Loan for Earthquake Strengthening of Our Lady of Grace was fully paid off in January 2020	
Total Funds gifted by Parishioners	158,268.16
Insurance Costs	24,207.97
Archdiocesan Levies	19,584.57
These provide funding to the Archdiocese of Wellington to cover costs of running the Archdiocese and National Commitments	
Clergy Support	48,208.22
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	
CDF Loan repayments made	25,165.99
Interest Paid on CDF Loan	548.42

Significant Items of Upcoming Maintenance include

Realignment of roofline of Pettit Centre to remove internal gutter and repair flood damaged (12/12/19)	6,000.00
Repair of glass wall of porch outside OLOG meeting room	
Replacement of rotten bargeboards OLOG	3,000.00
Replacement of end windows OLOG	4,000.00
	20,000.00

Roger Wasson

**Chairman
Finance Committee**



Catholic Women's League

Heretaunga Branch of Catholic Women's League is happy to report we still have around thirty members. The average number at our monthly meetings is between twenty and twenty-five. We welcome any casual visitors too.

We continue to be a social group while still maintaining our core values of faith and service.

We get together regularly with other Branches in the Wellington region to renew friendships and to celebrate special occasions.

Our Advent reflection in early December, shared with Upper Hutt and Hutt City, is an opportunity to prepare for the busy Christmas season with prayer and fellowship.

At our February meeting we challenged Upper Hutt to a wearable arts competition. All garments were to be made from recyclable materials. Deservedly, Upper Hutt won with several outfits made with wallpaper, plastic bottle tops and plastic bags. The next challenge is ours to win!

All the outfits made were modelled at our Archdiocesan Conference held in Upper Hutt in March. The Conference was our last chance to gather for several months.

Although we haven't had a big fundraiser this year we continue to have a raffle and sales table at our monthly meetings.

A popular fundraiser was the movie Downton Abbey which was open to other parishioners too.

The various organisations we've supported in the past year include the Tourettes Association, our At Home Appeal for 2019, the Sisters of Compassion, St Vincent de Paul and St Brendan's School.

At our June meeting we collected groceries and toiletries for St Vinnies and for the month of July we have asked the Parish for donations of pyjamas for Wellington Children's Hospital.

We still have busy knitters supplying grateful schools with beanies and slippers!

Much of what we do relies on the support and generosity of the Parish and Father Tony.

With thanks and blessings to you all,

Chris Wasson

President

Circle of Friendship

As our name suggests, we are a friendly, informal gathering (no membership requirements, minutes, motions or attendance records!) meeting on the first Saturday of the month 2-4pm in the Parish hall. We alternate our gatherings with a guest speaker one month and a voluntary 'sharing time' (favourite book, recommended movie, holiday musings, childhood memories, but to name a few). We begin with a short prayer and /or bible reading relating to the theme.



Guest speakers include people from our local community eg: Theresa Homan from UH Housing trust, Ann Peebles from UH Citizens Advice, Trish Hanaray, a Brigidine sister, Tracey Blake from IHC, Annette Reid, gardener from the Rose society, Jill Birkett .parishioner, speaking of her Camino walk experience , etc., many kind and wonderful speakers, and all very well-received.

We are always open to suggestions for future speakers of interest.

Our attendance averages 20+ to 40 and friends of all denominations are welcome to come to any gathering.

A talented music group from St. Mary's Anglican Church Silverstream has provided entertainment for us on several occasions.

Entry donation of a gold coin is used to cover any expenses and a donation to the speaker's charity or a charity of our choice.

A 'book-swap' table is a popular draw card, and there is a box for collection of any toiletry items to be donated to Women's Charitable organizations.

Our gathering finishes up with afternoon tea (small plate of food is acceptable, optional but not compulsory!) and the noise level rises rapidly as we mix and mingle to finish the afternoon.

Our planning committee meet 3 or 4 times a year, and aims to foster the friendly sociable vibe we enjoy each month.

Committee Members: Judy Mc Mahon, Brenda Lister, Helen Dench, Kathy Smith, Trish McCauley, Denise Allen, Rita David, Josephine Eynon, Pauline Quinn.

Filipino Community

(Community for the Holy Family)



As a group of migrant families, the Community for the Holy Family provides a unique ministry of music and presence in the Our Lady of the Valleys Parish, especially in the Our Lady of Grace church in Heretaunga, Upper Hutt. At the Mass of fourth Sunday of the month, the choice of songs is a combination of New Zealand, Filipino and commonly played liturgical songs. In a simple way, the ability to exercise this ministry demonstrates the invitation, participation and support for diverse groups to get engaged in the life of the Parish. In the Catholic churches in New Zealand, the presence of migrants from many parts of the world is increasingly being observed, and will continue to be so. It is very encouraging to see migrants and migrant faith groups, like the Community for the Holy Family provided with opportunities to be actively involved in various ministries including community leadership. Such involvement extends beyond the parish. For the Community, some of its members continue to be actively involved in the works of the Commission for Ecology, Justice and Peace, and the Filipino Chaplaincy Pastoral Council in the Archdiocese of Wellington.

The families that make up the Community for the Holy Family continue to come together for communal prayers and choir practices. The Community uses the Pettit Centre for these gatherings on Saturdays before the fourth Sunday, from 4:30-7:30pm. However from March 2020, these regular activities were disrupted by the security lockdown brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. During this time, the Community continued to be connected with one another and with the Parish through the Parish's emails, notices and inspiring and prayerful reflections especially during the Holy Week and Easter celebrations. Like everyone else we were constantly on the lookout of when would the parishioners be allowed back to physically come and worship together in the church. Now that lockdown had been eased, the Community is able to plan initial steps to resume the ministry. Embracing some sense of normality being able to come, pray and sing together, there is a deep awareness however that the pandemic significantly changed the society, the Parish, and the Community. We are aware that the rest of the world continues to suffer from COVID-19. In many places, people are still restricted on their movements and the challenges they bring including inability to provide to their families' basic needs like food or access to contactless education for their children, and continuing threat of being contaminated by the virus. We remember and pray deeply for families and friends especially those known to us who have lost loved ones to COVID-19.

The Community of the Holy Family will continue to provide music for the 4th Sunday Mass at the Our Lady of Grace church, and will support programmes that encourage active involvement of the migrants and the poor in the parish life. Through some of its members, the Community can assist in building stronger relationship between the Parish and the Commission for Ecology, Justice and Peace, and the Filipino Chaplaincy in their efforts to

respond to the impact of the pandemic on the vulnerable families in our communities, including migrant temporary working visa holders. The Community also welcomes anyone who may be interested to join its regular prayers, music ministry and service for those in need.

John Domdom

Leader

Overflow Youth Group



At the start of the year 2020, OVERFLOW had the opportunity to experience a 2-day 1-night retreat at the Magnificat Community where we had Ignatius Susilo from the ICPE (Institute for World Evangelisation) Community, facilitate the programme for the weekend. The purpose of this retreat was to focus on our individual faith journeys and explore the wonders and changes that music ministry not only had on each other but within ourselves. Although short, we left the retreat refreshed, recharged and ready to head into 2020. We were so ready, people were still singing so loud, that it echoed throughout the Rimutaka hill range :)



OVERFLOW Retreat (L-R): Faletasi Launiuvao, Kone Launiuvao, Ignatius Susilo (ICPE), Barbara Aukusitino, Miriama Launiuvao, Lagi Aukusitino, David Osa, Anna-Marie Sio, Sia Scanlan and Tiana Sio

2020

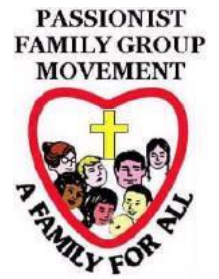
was a significant year for us, we had agreed to start our music ministry within our mass celebrations and now lead music liturgy in St Francis Xavier every 3rd Sunday and at Our Lady of Grace every 5th Sunday. We had our first Worship Night of the year on Sat 7th March and had the pleasure of seeing new faces come and praise together with us. However, when COVID arrived, things seemed to come to a grinding halt. However, OVERFLOW took this opportunity to reflect our ministry and made us realise how much we missed not only the fellowship but having other brothers and sisters there for you.

We are currently in discussion in when the next worship night is to be held but we will be leading music ministry at the weeks mentioned earlier. We are still 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 us by using the overflow email address: overflow31032019@gmail.com

Blessings,

Lagi Aukusitino

Passionist Family Groups



This year, 2020, is the 27th year of Family Groups in our parish. We have five groups that meet monthly or sometimes bi-monthly.

The Aubert group went into recess this year due to a lack of younger families wanting to participate. Thanks to Mark Hillhouse for co-ordinating the group following on from Pat and Janice Hault who established the group.

If any families would like to gather informally with others who you might meet at church, this might be a way forward in gaining a sense of belonging to our church family.

Family groups are for all ages, and are a great way for non-Catholic partners to feel included. The original group members have aged over the 27 years, and as with most parishes the groups also reflect the age group most prominent as attendees at church.

Family Groups provide opportunities for building friendships while getting together for outings and always enjoying food together! We try to keep costs minimal.

With no gatherings during the COVID-19 isolation (though plenty of phone calls) everyone has been keen to re-connect for lunch or dinner with their groups.

Anyone in the parish is MOST welcome to join in with any family group event. For more information just contact a group co-ordinator or Heather and Terry O'Brien.

The current group co-ordinators are
Christine and Mike O'Leary
Christine and Nigel Pask
Linda and Gordon Holmes
Tricia and Keith Nixon
Chris and John Henley
Parish co-ordinators Heather and Terry O'Brien

Thank you, particularly, to Father Tony for always encouraging and supporting Family Groups in our parish.

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 in Stokes Valley (known as the Aulotu), have two main groups that branch from this main community – the Samoan Aupaipese (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

Choir practice has been held every Wednesday 7:00pm and Saturday 2:00pm to prepare for the Sunday mass. With the Parish youth group OVERFLOW singing on the 3rd Sunday of every month, (which started earlier 2020) the choir sings on the 1st, 2nd, 4th and 5th Sundays at SFX.

With COVID-19 music was on hold for a while until we went down to level 2. The organist designated for that particular Sunday would put together a song selection and the choir would just sing on the Sunday with no choir practice to reduce contact tracing. As we have gone into level 1 choir practice will only be held if the organist has any new repertoire to introduce to the choir.

The Samoan youth work hand in hand with OVERFLOW with providing morning tea after 8:30am Sunday Mass. Morning tea is usually a spread of finger food made and provided by families within the aulotu and members of OVERFLOW. This has been a great way to fellowship with people within the Parish who attends Sunday mass and are willing to stay behind and chat and have something to eat and drink.

The aulotu continue to maintain the grounds around the church at Stokes Valley. The community gather every fortnight rain or shine in the early hours of Saturday mornings. Work includes a range of jobs – mowing/raking the grass, pruning trees, water blasting. Any lawn waste or general rubbish from the job is also taken care of by the community. If there is a family that is on the roster to clean the church, we all gather as a community to help out and we 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.

Aukusítino Aukusítino

President of the Samoan Aulotu - SFX



St Brendan's School

We are very familiar with the whakatauki, 'he waka eke noa'. Pope Francis used this during the Urbi and Orbi blessing on the steps of St Peter's Basilica in March while New Zealand was in lockdown. "We have realized that we are on the same boat, all of us fragile ... but at the same time important and needed, all of us called to row together ... only together can we do this". We were called to row together, through the calm, the storms and the uncertainty. Together we took strength from our faith, we held onto hope and we kept connected with our school community during a very challenging time.

We are blessed to have an amazing group of professionals at St Brendan's. Monday, 23 March 2020 will remain a memorable date. Our team pulled together all of our preparation, 'turned on a dime' and gave 110% to remain connected with our students and families. Monday, 18 May was also memorable, the date from which we were able to catch up – not with the focus on what we had missed out on, but what we had been missing. We were very grateful for our community's ongoing support during these extraordinary times.

St Brendan's is "an inspirational Catholic school that challenges students to be the best that they can be, whilst walking hand in hand with Christ".

To begin Term 3, 2020 we will be launching our new St Brendan's our values:

- G - Gospel**
- R - Respect**
- A - Aspire**
- C - Compassion**
- E - Explore**

We have also renamed our three syndicates to reflect who we are as a school and our students' journey. Saint Brendan was a brave navigator who set sail on an adventure to explore the world.

Years 0-3: Explorers

Years 4-6: Adventurers

Years 7-8: Navigators

In 2019 our overriding Catholic Social Justice principle was 'Human Equality' and in 2020 it is 'Human Dignity'. The Catholic Social Teaching principles continue to shape our integrated learning.

Highlights of opportunities to connect with our Parish and faith community during the last twelve months include:

- ❖ Significant School Masses to start and finish the school year, Ash Wednesday and Assumption of Mary Masses, promotion of Parish Family Masses. Class Masses and Liturgies supported by Fr Tony.
- ❖ Termly Powhiri to welcome new students/families.
- ❖ Commissioning Mass for Catholic School staff.
- ❖ Saint Brendan's Feast Day was a focus during Distance Learning.
- ❖ 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.
- ❖ Parish volunteers supporting music for school Masses.
- ❖ Weekly St Vincent de Paul collections, Mufti Mania for Caritas and other fundraising.
- ❖ Connecting with local retirement villages and the Home of Compassion.
- ❖ Growth in Knowledge self-review.
- ❖ Sacramental programme.
- ❖ Celebration of Laudato Si' Week, Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and Suzanne Aubert's Birthday.
- ❖ Strengthening links with our neighbouring, and other, Catholic schools.

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

Members of our conference continue to put their time and energies into a variety of activities. These consist of visitations (both public and private homes) - 76hrs; transport - 40hrs; attending funerals - 34 hours; food parcels and other - 18 hours while 90 hours were spent at the St Vinnies' shop, in Stokes Valley.

We have maintained our links with the St John's Anglican food bank; providing non-perishable goods kindly donated by parishioners. We also receive very generous baskets of goods from St Brendan's School. Cartons of gifts were also donated for Xmas parcels. We distributed grocery and warehouse vouchers amounting to over \$3,000.

Our conference continues to respond to requests for financial assistance from families or individuals in need. An example was an Iraqi family who needed furniture and other household items. A lounge suite and kitchen stools were obtained from the Petone shop while the Conference purchased household goods as well as a motor mower for them; the total amounting to over \$900.

This year, we gained one new member. Vaughan was welcomed (along with three new members into the Stokes Valley conference) in an initiation ceremony followed by a blessing of all members from Fr Tony.

Our conference is very grateful to the Stokes Valley conference for their continued financial support.

I would like to give my personal thanks to my committee members - Brenda Lister (Secretary) Kevin von Keisenberg (Treasurer), Marion Conroy, Leola Kelly, Josette Gibbs, Ben Perera and Vaughan Lloyd-Jones for their valued support.

There are still some empty seats around the committee table if you would like to join us. We meet on the second Wednesday of the month (1 hour from 7.15pm).

Terry Kavanagh

President

St Vincent de Paul Society – Stokes Valley



Our society was able to help a wide range of people which was made possible by our SVDP shop in Stokes Valley which had another good year made possible by our cheerful volunteers.

We thank all the generous people who donated either financially or with gifts of food, clothing, furniture etc.

The standard of merchandise in the shop has been raised, this has resulted in better sales.

We are still helping through donations, The Catholic Student Assistance Fund, and our National Council remitting money to countries suffering natural disasters.

We thank Silverstream College for their donations of tinned food which was distributed throughout Our Lady of the Valleys Parish.

A special thank you to Veronica Sawers, Principal of St. Brendan's School, staff members, and pupils who did such a wonderful job of donating and wrapping Christmas presents for less fortunate children.

Savili is a village in Samoa that has connections to our Samoan community. The village has trouble educating their children and also providing the basics for a reasonable standard of living. Our society is exploring ways to help them.

Nothing could be done without our hard working committee Jan Fletcher(Shop Manager) Frances Cummings (Secretary) Lei Solia (Treasurer) Chris Henley, Win Lewer and Frances Williams.

From March 2019 to March 2020 we have carried out:

Ministering Holy Communion to the sick	309
Home Visits	269
Meals	19
Hospital Visits	9
Support at funerals	11
Food parcels	327
Furniture	34
Refugee Resettlement	3
Food parcels for Christmas	38
Christmas Toys -birth to 14 years	145

A big thank you to the hard-working Frank Vailini who does the pickups of furniture and delivers it to the shop. Also, he picks up surplus food from the supermarket and then delivers to the food bank and people in need. Thanks go also to Margaret Lanigan who continues to sell the Christmas cards on our behalf.

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 2019-20

Available on request to parishioners from the Parish Office



Parish Statistics



	2020	2019	%
Average Mass attendance per Sunday (November)	534	508	5.1% ▲
Sacraments Conferred			
Baptism	25	30	(16.6%) ▼
Confirmation	45	53	(15.0%) ▼
Marriage	2	3	(33.3%) ▼
Funerals Celebrated	24	21	14.3% ▲
Families on Parish Roll	836	848	(1.4%) ▼
Individuals on Parish Roll	2219	2237	(0.8%) ▼
Registered Planned Givers	243	226	7.5% ▲

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

