



Facilitated Event Summary

Parish: Bright

Date: 7th November 2012

Venue: Killough Parish Hall

Introduction and Purpose:

On Wednesday 7th November, around 25 people from the Parish gathered in Killough for the second in a series of group meetings designed to establish- in time- a Parish Pastoral Council in the Parish. We had a good many people who had returned after coming to session one as well as some people who came along tonight for the first time. We welcomed the presence of one and all.

A Praying Discerning Community

We began the evening with a period of prayer as a way of 'arriving' at the session and looking to God for direction for our session this evening. Each of the sessions we undertake will begin with a period of 15-20 minutes of prayer; sometimes silent, sometimes using scripture and reflection. This allows us to model the type of Church we want to see: a Church that is a Praying, Discerning Community. We continued our prayer using a reading from the Gospel of Luke (Lk24: 1-8):



On the first day of the week, at the first sign of dawn, they went to the tomb with the spices they had prepared. They found that the stone had been rolled away from the tomb, but on entering they discovered that the body of the Lord Jesus was not there. As they stood there not knowing what to think, two men in brilliant clothes suddenly appeared at their side. Terrified, the women lowered their eyes. But the two men said to them, "Why look among the dead for someone who is alive? He is not here; he has risen.

Remember what he told you when he was still in Galilee: that the Son of Man had to be handed over into the power of sinful men and be crucified, and rise again on the third day?" And they remembered his words.

Patricia read the scripture for us twice and following this, there was a period of sharing from among the group about what had struck them in the reading. We ended by reflecting that, with God, all things are possible.

Introduction and Purpose

Before agreeing our purpose for the evening we agreed a set of guiding principles for the work:

- ✚ We are not the Parish Pastoral Council
- ✚ We are in the business of giving and receiving wisdom from all
- ✚ We collect any questions as we go
- ✚ Our work informs the way forward
- ✚ We meet in the Spirit of Christ-what does God want?
- ✚ We seek consensus- not voting
- ✚ Not 'did I get what I want or did you get what you want- more can I live with the outcome and is it what is best for our Parish.

The purpose of the evening was then agreed as:

- ✚ To gather together as a community in prayer
- ✚ To review the outcomes of our first session
- ✚ To consider in more depth the work of a Parish Pastoral Council (PPC)

Review of Session 1

We took time to review the process and outcomes from session 1. These are written up and available at <http://www.downandconnor.org/livingchurch/pastoral-area-teams/>

Exercise

Our task for this evening was to break into groups and consider the following:

In your group consider what areas the PPC would prioritise in their Pastoral Plan for the Pastoral Area.

We encouraged a period of 'privileged listening' where all members of the group could say what they wanted to see happening in the Parish. Following this period of listening, the group were asked to feedback 3 ideas. We then grouped the ideas according to the themes they represented:



There were practical tasks behind each of these ideas:

Youth: Faith Based Youth Group, Forming a link with young parents

Faith Development: Catechesis, Faith Development Programme, Pariah Mission, Promote/Develop liturgy

Shared (Practical) Responsibility: Share management load with Fr Peter (financial, premises)

Outreach: Social Justice, reach out to 3rd world, apostolic living, Ecumenical, visitation of elderly, sick, lonely, marginalised

Community Development: Co-ordination (link to other Parish groups), Parish Environmental Project, unification of the Parish, entertainment and social activities, communication within the Parish

Having completed this exercise, we went on to look at some other ideas of what areas a Pastoral Area Team could focus on. This work came from a book called, Parish Pastoral Councils: A Formation Manual (Snoddy, McNally and Campbell). They suggest the following areas:

- ✚ Worship
- ✚ Community Building
- ✚ Education and Formation
- ✚ Social Outreach

We were heartened by the cross over between what we had discovered together and what was suggested by the research. The work we have done in this exercise will help form part of the work of the PPC, who will be given all of our ideas when they are formed. In this way, those who were present tonight have already contributed to the renewal of their Parish.

Conclusion:

This was, once again, a lively and enjoyable meeting. To have such good numbers of committed people come to a meeting like this is very encouraging and surely is a sign of good things to come in the Parish of Bright. We agreed our next tasks as:

- ✚ Our next meeting will be on **12th December 2012 at 7.30** in Killough Parish Hall
- ✚ The topic will be: **What is a Parish?**
- ✚ Jim from Living Church will continue to facilitate the meetings
- ✚ Jim will provide a write up of this and subsequent sessions for the Parish bulletin as well as the Living Church website:
<http://www.downandconnor.org/livingchurch/pastoral-area-teams/>
- ✚ All Parishioners are welcome to attend these meetings
- ✚ People can attend one, some or all of the meetings