

HOLY SPIRIT PARISH RINGWOOD NORTH

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

18th MAY 2017
7.30 pm, Mary Bresnan Room

PARISH GROUP REPORTS

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

The role of the Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) is to promote the Church's mission to live and communicate the love and values of Christ in our world. The PPC shares in the responsibility for the ongoing life and development of the faith community, working together with parishioners to provide support for their efforts to live as followers of Christ.

We are blessed by the fact that we have so many groups in our parish community – as evidenced in this annual report – that are involved in, and do tremendous work in the ongoing life and development of our community. The PPC is most appreciative of the efforts of the few, but tireless volunteers who have produced great outcomes in the past twelve months across all the portfolios of:

Community and Hospitality – events that provide opportunity for fellowship.

Liturgy and Celebration – relates to all things liturgical including the special occasions of Holy Week, Easter, Christmas, Pentecost, and the Sacraments.

Faith and Witness – involves the provision of opportunities and programs to support faith formation and growth.

Service and Outreach – incorporates those activities specifically aimed and designed to provide a service within or beyond the parish for the individual or common good.

We commend the reports of each group to you.

Pope Francis declared 2016 as the Year of Mercy. Rightly so, this was the major focus at Holy Spirit for 2016. Through the excellent work of Mary Ryan and her team, the parish was exposed to many Year of Mercy activities. Hopefully, we are now more aware of God's merciful love. Thank you, Mary.

This year, 2017 is the 100th anniversary of the apparition of Our Lady at Fatima. The PPC is yet to address how we will mark this occasion.

The major focus of the PPC so far this year has been to explore the ideas put forward by Fr James Mallon in his book 'Divine Renovation –from Maintenance to a Missional Parish'. This is being done in partnership with more than 70 parishioners who are reading the book. Thank you parishioners for your interest and involvement.

The direction that the parish will take is yet to be decided, and will not be known until after this AGM.

The PPC is also exploring ways that we might be able to help refugees who have settled in the Eastern region of Melbourne.

Dominic North-Coombes, Parish Pastoral Council

COMMUNITY AND HOSPITALITY

LITTLE SPIRITS PLAYGROUP

Little Spirits Playgroup has been very busy last year and so far this year.

Last year we had 13 children joined Playgroup with 3 children leaving us due to kinder timetable. We ended the year on a high booking our Christmas party at Base Camp Playcentre where the children did a baking class making reindeer cookies and created many memories with their old and new friends. The mum's also celebrated the year by getting together at the Cellar door.

This year, we have 16 children joining Little Spirits Playgroup ages from a year old to 5 years old. It has been a very busy year so far making lots of arts and crafts, celebrating lots of birthdays and enjoying a day out at the park to celebrate Easter. It was a fun day and all the children were treated to an Easter egg hunt and a picnic.

This week, we will be celebrating Mother's Day and the children will be treating the mum's with a Morning tea and a manicure and a beaded keyring which the children happily made for their mums.

We will have 8 children leaving Playgroup by the end of the year as they head to Prep next year, including Tanya and myself. (Yes, both Sienna and Paige who seems to have been forever at playgroup will start their big girl adventures at school next year 😊) We have started the recruiting process to keep this wonderful tradition at our Parish community going. We will let the Parish know who will take over closer to the end of the year.

Sharon Wolff
Little Spirits Playgroup Co-ordinator

HOLY SPIRIT FETE

The Holy Spirit Fete committee this year is continuing to focus on refining our processes and procedures to ensure that we can continue to provide the Ringwood North community with the very best fete in the area.

We are looking to improve our communication processes with the wider community, parish and school, through more extensive use of social media such as Facebook, Twitter and Class Dojo(App). We will also be communicating with people face to face the old fashioned way as well. We believe that we need to be able to broadcast events such as free dress days, working bees and call to arms easily and get people involved.

This year we are planning on having a competition to get young people to design a new Fete logo, which will be used on Billboards, Brochures, Advertising Material and social media campaigns. We are in the process of finalising the logistics of this and we will run this competition through Schools in the area. Including Holy Sprit, St Annes, Whitefirars, Sion, Aquinas and possibly. The winner of the competition will be given 3 wristbands and food voucher, value to be determined. The competition will be open to children from 8-15 years. The theory about this is to get the whole community engaged.

We have reviewed stalls and are in the last stage of finalising the mix and layout. Raffle has been finalised, tickets and distribution is being organised. One major change to sponsorship and promotion is that we will have real estate boards up 4 weeks prior to the fete in order to gain maximum attention and give our wonderful sponsors more exposure. This was as a result of review of last year when seeking feedback from sponsors.

We are on getting back up to speed with the fete and we are keen to ensure that it will be as successful as in previous years. We are always keen for people to help out.

*Mark Johnstone
Fete - President*

PARISH DINNERS – No report received.

HOLY SPIRIT NETBALL CLUB

We have had some great results on the court over the past year, with a number of teams playing in finals and winning grandfinals over the past 12 months.

HSNC is the largest club competing at MENA with 20 teams being entered from under 9 through to open age groups.

We have been very fortunate to pick up 2 new committee members for the 2017 year. A sincere thankyou to the committee for all of their hard work: Sandra Schipano (Vice President); Kerry Crombie (Secretary); Sue Neal (Treasurer); Belinda Semos (Coaches Coordinator); Jade Eastwood (Minutes Secretary); Amelia Mills (Registrar); Louise Downes (Publicity); Maddi McQuiggan (Umpires Coordinator); Cath Stone (Property Officer); Amanda Conway (Uniform), Claire McCartin (General Committee). We acknowledge the resignation of Kylie Papadopolous and thank her for her hard work over the years.

Although our netball focus is at club level, we congratulate a number of girls who represent MENA and Ariels in their representative programs.

Thanks to Jess Hooper and Amanda Bullock (with the assistance of Kerry Crombie, Sandra Schipano and Cath Stone) for framing the teams for our winter and spring competitions. This is a difficult job, with a lot of time and effort put into ensuring the best results possible.

Thanks to the coaches who volunteer their time to ensure teams “get on the court”. It is worth noting that the majority of our coaches don’t have a daughter playing in the team they coach.

Our training venue HE Parker, Heathmont is proving to be a perfect fit for our club. The club training at the 1 location on a Friday night provides a perfect backdrop for encouraging club morale and communication.

Our annual netta program is underway again, with Cath Stone coordinating this. We aim to get one if not two new teams. This is an ideal way to ensure our club continues to thrive.

Next year is an exciting time for MENA with a new stadium being built with indoor and outdoor courts. Work is scheduled to start in November and finish late 2018. Contingency plans are currently underway to ensure limited disruption to the competition.

We are clearly dependent on all the volunteers for the development of the club and the enjoyment our daughters derive from the wonderful game of netball.

Karen Woods, President

PARK ORCHARDS/NORTH RINGWOOD PARISH JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB

No report received.

SPIRIT MAGIC BASKETBALL CLUB

The following outlines a brief description of the Spirit Magic basketball Clubs' year in review.

The recently commenced Winter season sees our membership numbers at just over 400 players – the first time the 400 mark has been broken for a Winter season in recent history – this continuing an upward trend in playing numbers.

The securing, during the year, of the Aquinas College gym as a training venue on a second evening (Wednesday) has helped us deal with the increasing training venue requirements associated with our membership growth. This Wednesday acquisition also allows for future projected playing number increases.

The last year saw more coaching development activity with a clinic run fully by Magic committee members late last year – this on the back of a number of externally run coaching clinics from Basketball Victoria the year before. At the time of writing, plans for initiating a program of Ringwood Hawks senior player visits to Magic training sessions is being 'hatched' – this a further initiative in the development of our players & coaches.

Other events during the last 12 months worthy of mention include a Bunnings BBQ where although only a relatively modest amount of money was raised, the sense of community engendered by the event made it a worthwhile initiative. Additionally in what is starting to become a routine event – Spirit Magic was once again involved in the Vinnies Christmas hamper appeal – raising \$700 to fund hampers for needy families in the area.

The year(s) ahead presents challenges specifically in the area of attracting new committee members, particularly those parents with players in the younger age groups, with a view to them transitioning into key roles to 'take the club forward' – this in light of the length of service of some of the current committee.

*Leon McKenna
President – Spirit Magic Basketball Club*

LITURGY AND CELEBRATION

LITURGY TEAM

The Holy Spirit Liturgy Team is a small and dedicated group. Several members are also choir members. Whilst these roles go hand in hand, it does also create some "conflicts of interest" for major occasions, as those members are not available to assist during the Masses. However, we do manage to recruit helpers, often with a tap on the shoulder before Mass begins, to get us through the liturgy.

As a team, we meet to discuss, prepare and co-ordinate special Masses, (including introductions, Prayers of the Faithful, reflections, etc), Forgiveness Rites, gifts for Mothers' & Fathers' Day Masses. We prepare the church for various occasions - changing the altar linen for the appropriate liturgical season, putting up relevant banners, decorating the church and preparing the foyer with artwork, messages etc. Many Saturday mornings there will be a bevy of activity going on, attending to the small details which can make a liturgical celebration so much more meaningful, i.e. altar cloths & banners being ironed, or creating a 'focus' near the sanctuary which reinforces the theme of the Mass.

The response to our Holy Week/ Easter ceremonies has been overwhelmingly positive, with many messages and letters of thanks for the effort put into preparing these liturgies. This is a huge effort from the team and the many parishioners we "recruit" to assist, and to those people we say "Thank you, we couldn't manage it without you". Special thanks need to go to Marita North-Coombes, Karen McQuade, Kerry Haddow, Lawry Cecconello, Fiona Massarotti, Marian McClelland and Shirley Graham, who, along with the other Liturgy team members, co-ordinated the various Easter celebrations. Also a huge thanks to the choir – many hours of rehearsal go into the Easter Triduum and it just wouldn't be the same without their contribution.

I would particularly like to highlight the work Karen McQuade puts into preparing the artwork, foyer, banners etc. that enhance our liturgical environment so much. Her dedication and talent is often left unacknowledged, and we need to recognise her contribution to our liturgies – we are extremely fortunate to have such a talented and generous member on our committee.

We are always looking for new ideas and several members of the team have attended workshops run by the Archdiocese specifically to glean new ideas and resources which we can use in our Parish celebrations. In February, we were able to attend a Lent/Easter workshop, at which many great ideas were presented. The opportunity to talk to other liturgists and share ideas was enormously beneficial. Fortunately, we have many creative and resourceful members in the team, and any new ideas presented are always greeted with enthusiasm.

As always, we are constantly looking for new members to join the Liturgy Team. This year will see some 'retirements', and new members will need to be recruited as a matter of urgency. If anyone would like to become involved, please contact the parish House for more details.

*Jenny Philp
Holy Spirit Liturgy Team*

CHOIR

Over the last year Choir numbers have remained stable around 12 to 14. We've lost a few (mainly to illness) and gained a few. We have sung most months at Mass throughout the year as well as the big Church Feasts of Christmas, Easter and Pentecost.

At Christmas and Easter our musical sound and volume is enhanced greatly with Peter Philp's sound system. We appreciate the time Peter puts in to getting things right.

We again sang at the Parish Family Carol night in December. This year we also sang Christmas carols at Eastland two weeks before Christmas. The Choir has become a tight knit group where everyone not only sings better but also ministers to each other. One example of that was when Marilyn had to undergo two operations on her right wrist and was unable to play the organ for six months. Maree took on more of the accompaniment role of the choir and Sister Marian stepped in to accompany the choir as well.

We enjoy introducing new music to the choir and congregation and are always looking for new repertoire.

There have been a lot of changes to the liturgical music over the last couple of years and the congregation seems to have adapted well.

Conclusion: We are a very happy group singing well together to enhance the liturgies and always welcoming new Choir members.

*Maree Buttler and Marilyn Grant
Choir Leaders*

ROSARY GROUP/PRAAYER FOR PRIESTS

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament is held on Wednesday nights from 7.00 pm to 8.00 pm with rosary prayed from 7.30 pm till 8.00 pm. We are now in our 26th year and have a core group of 14 or so but seldom have more than 10 people on any given night. During Lent, The Stations of the Cross are included. This usually attracts a few extra people. Rosary/Divine Mercy of Chaplet is recited at 9.30 am on Friday mornings.

First Saturday Devotion - This has been going since 1995 with a core group of 12-13 people. Our Lady asked for 5 First Saturdays when she appeared to the 3 children at Fatima, Portugal in 1917. The format is similar to Wednesday nights, with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament immediately after Saturday 9.30am mass, plus the rosary and Fatima prayers.

Marian Movement of Prayers for Priests - On Saturday mornings at 10 am we come together to pray for Priests. There are usually about 12-14 and includes people who come each week from Our Lady's Parish in Ringwood. Our Priests are precious and we need to always keep them in our prayers. We also pray for vocations to the Priesthood and for all of the young men in the Seminaries. This is important as we all know that our Communities are in great need of Priests.

Carmel Hill and Lyn Thwaites

CHRISTIAN MEDITATION

As a Meditation Group, we meet in the Holy Spirit Chapel every Tuesday morning from 9.15-10.00 am, but not during school holidays. On average our attendance rate is usually 5 people. Our aim as a group is to practice the ancient art of Christian meditation. Meditation involves stilling the mind, whereby we then get in tune with ourselves, nature and most importantly, God.

*Len Moore
Facilitator*

CHILDREN'S LITURGY

Children's Liturgy has continued to run well with fantastic support from our leadership team. We currently have 22 Children's Liturgy leaders; the majority are parents from our school, but we also have some secondary school and university students and some parishioners. Leaders are generally rostered on twice per term.

Our attendance numbers have varied, some weeks over the two masses we have close to 30 children and other weekends we are down to single figures. As seems to be the case in winter, our numbers are higher at Saturday night Mass as Sunday winter sport clashes with 10.30 Sunday Mass.

Speaking with the children who regularly attend, they have said that they enjoy being part of Children's Liturgy and they like hearing the children's gospel and learning from the leaders. They also like helping with special jobs, in particular being part of the offertory. They also like the activity sheets, particularly the find-a-words and the puzzles! We will continue to use the 'Look' resource for the children's activity sheets as they are clear and easy to read and the kids love the variety of puzzles each week.

We have recently been moved from the Community House rooms to the Parish House, whilst this is adequate for the short term it really does create some concerns about safety, with leaders and children needing to walk in the dark (on Saturday nights) both up and back to the Parish House and more than likely in inclement weather. We understand that this is just for a short time, so we look forward to moving back to the Community Rooms. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Fr Joe for his ongoing support and for always being so patient with the children. Thank you also to all of our wonderful leaders who give their time and energy each week, we appreciate all that you do to help the children of our parish grow in faith. Thank you.

Michelle Sherriff
Co-ordinator

SUNDAY HOME COMMUNION MINISTRY

We have a dedicated group of volunteers who go out in pairs, one pair each Sunday, to take Communion to Nursing Homes and private homes of those unable to come to Mass due to age or ill health.

We currently visit 3 nursing/group homes and two private residences. We have 7 pairs of volunteers (up from 6 last year) and 2 emergencies. We gained 1 extra volunteer this year, Angela Orwin.

Many thanks to our group of volunteers and may God bless them all.

Helen Scorgie
Coordinator

MONDAY EVENING MEDITATION

"Be still, and know that I am God" - Psalm 46:10

The evening meditation group was formed in early 2013 to provide an opportunity to spend time in stillness and silence in the evening. The friendly group meets fortnightly in the Holy Spirit Chapel (Monday Evenings 8pm). The attendees vary, but typically 4 to 8 people attend each gathering. We are ably lead by Clare Gill, who has trained in guiding meditation. Whilst Clare is not a Holy Spirit parishioner she volunteers in her role with us. We are very grateful to her for her leadership and for the preparation she does for our sessions.

We would love to welcome anyone with an interest in learning to meditate or in continuing their meditation practice to join our group. Should you wish to learn more, please email Yvette Collins at hsinfo@fastmail.com.au or call 040 787 3432.

Yvette Collins
Co-ordinator

FAITH AND SPIRITUALITY

HIGH SPIRITS

2017 is proving to be another very busy year at the parish house with the High Spirits class. We currently have enrolled 32 students with a waiting list of another 11 children. When accepting new families into the program we ensure that the family lives within the Parish boundaries and is prepared to become part of the parish community as well as attending classes. To address this issue I am in the initial stages of rolling out the 'Buddy Program' - a program that attempts to link parish families with High Spirit Families. The concept has been shared at the 1030 and 6pm masses with 10 families signing up so far!!

The High Spirit children are currently concentrating on the importance of daily prayer in their lives; a brief respite from preparation for the various sacraments undertaken throughout the year. In term 1 ten students received the sacrament of reconciliation, and last weekend seven students received the sacrament of confirmation. In term 3 we have 15 children looking to receive the joy of First Eucharist.

This program could not run except for the fantastic help received from my 3 volunteers – Jocelyn D'Souza, Lyn Thwaites and Maureen Chamberlin – without the phenomenal knowledge, humor and caring shown by these ladies each week, the program would lose its vitality. Thank you ladies for all that you are, week in and week out!!

*Ana Saro
Co-ordinator*

BAPTISM PREPARATION GROUP

The baptism preparation group has continued to facilitate the preparation of parents for the baptism of their infants and pre-school children throughout the year. Meetings occur monthly and are lead by two or three of our group of eight dedicated parish women. Typically between 5 and 8 families bring their children for baptism each month.

The program has not been reviewed or significantly changed for over ten years. A review to ensure the program meets the needs and expectations of new families is warranted. We would welcome assistance to do this, should anyone have an interest. We are planning to do this over the next twelve months.

Yvette Collins, Co-ordinator

RCIA

Holy Spirit Parish RCIA is a program that is run for adults seeking to learn more about the Catholic faith. Our team consists of Gloria Thomas, Lawrence Ceconello and myself and Fr Joe as our support member. This year's journey has been most enjoyable. Two young mothers with school aged children joined the program to learn more about what their children are being taught through their journey of faith. We meet at one of their homes each Tuesday evening for 1 1/2 hours and discuss all aspects of our Catholic traditions and faith.

The program began in late October 2016. We were delighted when they decided they would like to become Catholic.

This journey was highlighted by the Rite of Election at St Patrick's Cathedral in March '17 and especially at the Easter Vigil where both Candidates were received into the Church through the Sacraments of Eucharist and Confirmation.

The program continues for a few more months as we work our way to the end it. We give thanks for the dedicated and generosity of our RCIA Team for the time they devote to this program.

Tina Toomey, Pastoral Worker.

SERVICE AND OUTREACH

EVERGREENS

The “Evergreens” have continued over the past 12 months, offering support and friendship, by way of monthly meetings with Mass, morning tea, guest speakers and social outings etc. – we welcome guests to join us on our outings as bus hire costs have increased.

We attended the Healthy Ageing meetings at Realm.

Eight members accepted an invitation to a luncheon at Aquinas College, the students being our hosts, providing an opportunity for interaction.

Lisa Bullock is now organising our music, with thanks to Loretta Ferguson for many years of service in that role.

A number of our Support Team are foundation members, with 36 year service, so we will welcome any younger people to our Group.

We acknowledge with thanks the School’s help in providing extra parking space on our meeting day.

Jean Smith

SPIRIT MAGAZINE

The Spirit magazine continues to be well received, with many positive comments made about each edition, however there are issues and challenges to be reviewed as always. Currently we print 700 black & white copies and the file is then uploaded to the parish website in colour. This does mean the quality of the photos in the print copy do suffer in clarity in order to present the best possible colour photo’s online. This was discussed at the time of going to colour online and I believe it remains the correct choice.

CONTENT - We attempt to present an overview of general parish community life whilst also offering a broad range of articles to meet the aims of our charter “To inform, and to support Community Awareness and communication”. We continue to attract a range of offerings from our community, the majority of which are printed, and continue to try to increase the number of submissions. Generally speaking the criteria on which articles are judged to be suitable is based on whether the topic is one, which could be divisive within our relatively small readership and community.

We have a new printer, Minuteman Press Mitcham, now owned by a parishioner. With one issue printed it is working well. We have a reduction in the cost of preparation, whilst the actual printing costs remain similar. Advertising revenue is a challenge, with the loss of 2 clients due to the sale of a business, and a retirement. We would really like some assistance with advertising sales if anyone can help. Currently our advertising revenue only covers the cost of approximately 1.5 issues. Aware of costs and changing demographics within the community we continue to ask ourselves the question of relevance within a digital world – IE Facebook etc. However, at this time the general consensus from the community indicates a very strong desire to keep the Spirit magazine going. I am currently looking at the possibility of syndicating the pages of general articles for use in a couple of parishes who receive copies and comment on the quality of the Spirit, indicating a desire to have something similar for their communities. Big thinking but - Thank you for your support.

Helen Konynenburg, Editor

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY

The year under review has not seen any lessening of calls for assistance from our clients, who number approx.. 90. The problems which affect the less well off (more so than the more affluent) range from high rents, increasing utility costs, school fees (which incorporates uniforms, books and camps), medical, transport, food and clothing. Our members respond as best they can but there are limitations due to financial restraints – we are fortunate that we are able to call on our Regional Council (which is partly funded from The Ringwood Centre) to help funding.

Our Christmas Hamper and Toy Appeal was a wonderful effort from our Parishioners, who provided well in excess of 80 beautifully prepared hampers and also donated toys so that we were able to provide 3 toys for each child.

Our Assist A Student appeal resulted in us being able to fund \$70,000 each for 25 primary students in India and Bangladesh – this was mainly due to the efforts of our Holy Spirit School students.

We also support 4 overseas conferences in India and The Philippines in our Twinning Program – this involves Christmas and Easter Grants.

Apart from our home visits, which average 10 per week, we continue our fruit and vegetable weekly runs plus our weekly bread runs.

Our Conference members are well occupied and our thanks are extended to our Parishioners whose ongoing support enables us to carry on our work.

Ron Smith
President

GRIEF AND LOSS SUPPORT MINISTRY

The activities of the Ministry over the past 12 months have been very similar to previous years. Throughout the year, in liaison with Tina, we establish a list of those parishioners who have recently experienced bereavement. This information is used to establish three instances of contact with these parishioners.

The Ministry continues the practice of sending letters of support to the bereaves several months after the death of a close loved one. A second contact is made at the time of the First Anniversary of death when a card is sent to the bereaved parishioner.

Contact with these recently bereaved parishioners is made in the form of a personal invitation to our annual Mass of Remembrance in November. We also include a notice of the Mass in The Word in case someone has missed out on the letter. This Mass is held at a time when most people are caught up with the busyness of pre-Christmas activities. This special Mass provides an opportunity for the bereaved to be supported by members of the Grief and Loss Support Ministry as we acknowledge that this will be their first Christmas without their loved one.

Robin Walsh
Coordinator

PASTORAL CARE

Luke 6:38

“Give, and you will receive.

You will be given much.

**Pressed down, shaken together, and running over,
it will spill into your lap.**

The way you give to others is the way God will give to you.”

What a beautiful reading and how it inspires us to forget our own needs and to put others first.

Another busy year in the Pastoral Care Ministry has given me the chance to spend quality time with parishioners in the good times and tough times of their lives. We have lost many of our parishioners this past year and we keep praying for them and to them.

Much time was spent helping the bereaved with their personal and spiritual needs preparing the farewell mass or prayer service for their loved ones.

Home visits to new parishioners is an enjoyable part of my role at Holy Spirit which really helps those who have just arrived into the community looking for links and familiar faces so that they can feel connected when they attend Sunday worship.

Weekly and monthly home & nursing home communion visits and monthly Mass at Cherry Tree Village is also a great outreach ministry that keeps me busy.

Day to day activity in the parish house is also a wonderful opportunity for the parish house team to involve ourselves in the lives of so many of our parishioners and get to know their personal stories as we all help each other through our experiences and faith journeys. Please know that you are always welcome to pop into the parish house for a cuppa, chat or just to say hello.

If there is ever something in your life that you may like support in, a confidential and compassionate friend is there for you.

If you would like a home visit from either Fr. Joe or myself please call the office and speak to us personally or leave us a message.

At Holy Spirit Parish we are truly blest having a compassionate, active and loving Parish Priest, Fr. Shibu Joseph who is always there to care for his flock whenever and wherever needed.

Let us all keep him in our prayers as he ministers to us all, along with all the other roles he must play in his everyday life.

Life is not easy for a Priest in a parish and school community and he has two Primary schools and three parishes to oversee.

Peace and blessings to all and thank you for entrusting me with the Role of Pastoral Worker at Holy Spirit Parish, Nth. Ringwood.

*Tina Toomey
Pastoral Worker*

OTHER REPORTS

Year of Mercy and Divine Renovation

Pope Francis declared Dec 2015 to late November 2016 to be a year of significance for the universal church. A special committee in the parish was formed and a number of initiatives undertaken with the overall aim being to inform, educate and engage parishioners, school families and the local community in the Year of Mercy.

These initiatives included:

- A Year of Mercy Banner for display in the Church
- A take home activity for school families, related to the Year of Mercy once a term during the year.
- The construction of a new door frame within the internal double doors at the church entrance, to make a proper ‘Mercy Doorway’ for the year. This continues to highlight the importance of the Extraordinary Jubilee Year and also provide ‘instruction’ to all those who pass through it, due to the plaques naming the Corporal & Spiritual Works of Mercy, down either side of the new frame.
- A purchase of a customized ‘Welcome to Holy Spirit Parish’ door mat for the entrance.
- Focus on the Sacrament of Reconciliation as recommended by Pope Francis. Extensive promotion of the Lenten Forgiveness Service at St Anne’s, and the creation of a ‘How to receive the Sacrament Booklet’ for use at the service and for information via the parish/school websites.
- A billboard for Oban Rd designed to promote the message of Year of Mercy using a picture of Pope Francis’ blessing a group of homeless people.
- A ‘Mercy Matters’ Mass held instead of the regular Winter Warmer’s Mass in June to tie in with the Feast of the Sacred Heart, traditional Poorman’s Mass and St Vinnies food drive. The mass coincided with the parish visit of Archbishop Denis Hart who presided at this very special celebration.

- A ‘Wall of Mercy’ created for the back of the Church. This project invited school/parish members to bring a photo of someone who has shown mercy to them in their life and been an inspiration explaining how/why in 50 words or less. This was embraced by over 100 participants and the individual plaques still adorn and honour many ordinary and dearly loved ‘models of mercy’.

RENOVATION @ HOLY SPIRIT –IT’S DIVINE

On Wednesday the 16th November 2016, a number of parishioners attended a very inspirational evening in the company of around 325 people from across the Melbourne Archdiocese and beyond. The guest speaker for the event was Fr James Mallon, Parish Priest of St Benedict’s, Halifax, Nova Scotia. (a province of Canada) Highly acclaimed for his work with parish renewal and the New Evangelisation, Fr James shared practical ways to inject new life into parishes. Over several years, a process has emerged at St Benedict’s which has been producing remarkable results. This strategy — the ‘Game Plan’ — is a dynamic discipleship pathway which other parishes can develop. Fr James’ engaging and accessible style challenges us to rethink our models of parish life, in order to become more vibrant and dynamic communities of missionary disciples who proclaim and share the Good News with others. Priests and parishes around the world have been inspired by Fr James and his team to ‘renovate’ their parishes to reflect more deeply who we are as Church. His book, ‘Divine Renovation: Bringing your Parish from Maintenance to Mission’ is a compelling read and clearly outlines his experience and vision.

On 16th February 2017 a presentation on the above was given at the PPC meeting in order to share Fr Mallon’s vision and discuss the possible application for the future direction of Holy Spirit. Fr Joe, members of the PPC, Finance committee and others in key leadership roles were present. The proposal to move forward by promoting broad readership of the book amongst all parishioners over the coming months was agreed by those in attendance. Hence the parish renewal project **Renovation @ Holy Spirit-it’s Divine** began.

Information was provided for parishioners at all masses over the weekend Sat 11th & Sun 12th March. Progress reports and updates continue to be ongoing in the Word, the Spirit, School bulletin and on the Parish Website. The parish purchased a number of copies of Fr Mallon's 'Divine Renovation' book which are currently in circulation. Book discussion groups are also currently in progress and providing a valuable and important forum to debrief with each other about Fr Mallon's vision as it relates to Holy Spirit Parish.

Over 60 parishioners including Fr Joe, are now participating in this process of learning and rediscovering the main purpose of our Church in the world and how our parish culture can change and move from a maintenance to mission mindset. It's not too late to catch up or join in, as the momentum continues to build. We hope many more will come along on June 4th, Pentecost Sunday when we will all gather for a communal lunch and forum to discuss what happens next.

We ask all parishioners to please pray for our community throughout this time of discernment about the future direction of the parish, as we seek to follow the guidance of our patron the Holy Spirit.

*Mary Ryan
on behalf of both committees*

Parish Website

Infrastructure changes

- During the weeks leading up to Easter 2017 (01/04/2017 – 13/04/2017) the web site was upgraded to DNN 8 (from DNN 6 I think). CAM had problems with the upgrade and holyspirit.com.au was inaccessible between 13/04/2017 and 18/04/2017 (it was still accessible via <http://www.cam.org.au/holyspirit>)

Changes

There have been no major changes to the parish web site in the past year.

From a content perspective, in the last 12 months the following new pages have been added or changes made to the Parish Website:

- New Parish Groups Added
 - Renovation @ HolySpirit, <http://www.holyspiritparish.org.au/Parish-Groups/Renovation-Holy-Spirit>
- Holy Spirit YouTube Channel videos added:
 - 07/10/2017: Year of Mercy - How we have embraced the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, <http://www.holyspiritparish.org.au/Year-of-Mercy/Year-of-Mercy-Video>, (thanks Mary R.)
 - 23/12/2016: Alpha is coming in 2017 - part of the renovation of Holy Spirit, <http://www.cam.org.au/holyspirit/Divine-Renovation/Alpha-Bear-Grylls-introduction>
- Other Content
 - New and Events section:
 - Renovation 2017, www.holyspiritparish.org.au/Divine-Renovation
 - PPC Christmas Message 2016, www.holyspiritparish.org.au/News-Events/PPC-Christmas-Message-2016 (Thanks Dominic N-C)

Usage – Summary

Key points are as follows:

1. In almost all cases the metrics for the site's usage has are largely the same except the following which reduced markedly:
 - a. Page Views -23%
 - b. Pages / Session -23%
 - c. Average Length of a session – 34%

As the number of users and sessions is essentially unchanged, it would seem that the web site is less engaging.

2. Peak web site usage for Christmas an Easter reduced by 10% and 20% respectively. Does this reflect the decline in Church attendance perhaps?
3. YouTube video usage is up slightly. I expect YouTube usage is largely dependent on the supply of on new content. Christmas and Easter video (older clips) usage has declined but new videos (Parish Stewardship, Year of Mercy and Alpha) have supported additional usage.
4. The Word is downloaded 10-20 times per week (I don't have comparative figures for prior years)

| Date | Week | Clicks |
|---------------|---|--------|
| 08-09/04/2017 | Palm Sunday | 58 |
| 15-16/04/2017 | Easter Sunday (Note web site was largely offline for CAM maintenances) | 48 |
| 29-30/04/2017 | 3 rd Sunday of Easter | 23 |

5. Page View counts of the most popular pages (I'm suspicious about the doubling of these figures and wonder if this relates to the dual domains (Holyspirit and CAM (ringwoodnorth) being monitored by Google Analytics.

| Page | 1/5/15 - 30/4/16 | 1/5/16 - 30/4/17 |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| The-Word-Newsletter | 798 | 1,820 |
| Mass-Times/Weekly-Services | 941 | 1,830 |
| Our-Parish/Parish-Calendar | 381 | 682 |
| The-Spirit-Magazine | 211 | 780 |

For more information refer to the parish web site:
www.holyspiritparish.org.au/Our-Parish/Parish-Group-Reports

Next Year

- Adding pages on the sacraments
- Extending the News & Events section
- Supporting Renovation @ Holy Spirit – It's Devine!

Michael O'Leary

HOLY SPIRIT SCHOOL

One of the major events of 2016 was the resignation of long serving principal, Peter Camilleri. After more than seventeen years Peter retired at the end of term one and Sue Johnston was appointed as principal for the remainder of the year. The school was well led and served by Sue and her team as things continued as intended.

Curriculum development continued to be a major focus under Sue's leadership. This centred around the exploration and implementation of the new Victorian Curriculum as well as forward planning for 2017. There was also a big emphasis on skilling staff in the 'School Wide Positive Behaviour' program and its subsequent implementation into the school. This has been helpful as students now have a consistent approach to learning social skills as well as appropriate consequences of this.

Another major event over the course of the year was the Cabaret performance in support of Performing Arts at the school. Funds raised from this event went towards hire of equipment.

Child safety also was a focus throughout the community as staff and volunteers were trained in the new 'Child Safe' legislation. Amongst other things the staff and board developed a Child Safe policy as well as a 'Code of Conduct.' Whilst our school was safe these added measures have further improved aspects of student supervision. Staff also undertook further training in anaphylaxis management and first aid procedures. This has meant that nearly all staff have a level two first aid qualification which will continue to be the minimum standard for all.

Duncan Arendse was subsequently appointed to lead the school in 2017 and Marianne Condon was also appointed as Religious Education Leader. The focus this year has so far been on improving the parish and school relationship as well as concentrating on social skill training for students.

Duncan Arendse
Principal

OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS CARE

Holy Spirit OSHC has had a great 12 months with increasing numbers in both our after school and before school programs as well as the vacation program.

We have enjoyed some fantastic excursions and incursions including the movies, roller skating, Harry Potter potions and mad science.

We have had a few staff changes over the year but currently have some wonderful casual staff and Nicole still doing a great job as 2IC.

Cassie, who has been with us for the past 2 years has unfortunately resigned to take up a position closer to her new home. We would like to acknowledge the great job she has done in both the acting director and 2IC positions. She will be missed by all the children and their families.

We are currently starting works to renovate the old community house to be used for the OSHC program. This will be a great move for all the staff and children and we eagerly wait for the completion of this!

Kathryn Newman
Director

FINANCES

2016 saw the running of a successful Stewardship Renewal program. In a finance sense 30 new pledges were received and pledges for financial support of pastoral services increased from \$168,900 (actual) to \$191,000 and for the support of father and his needs from \$20,800 to \$39,500 per annum.

Pledges to support rostered services and pastoral missions also increased slightly.

Actual donations of \$177,500 were received for the year, an increase of \$7,300 which was a slow start for the new level of donations. By the 2016Q3 donations were achieving appropriate levels.

We were all delighted when our dedicated and praiseworthy Fete Committee pulled off another record income and the Parish benefitted by \$40,000.

Total income for 2016 was \$252,400, up \$7,400 on 2015. There was no major social/fund raising event in 2016 which effected the overall increase in income.

Overall expense of \$249,300 was a reduction of \$11,200 on 2015, despite spending more on maintenance of the Community Centre roof, re-upholstering many of the chairs as well as paying for the Stewardship Program. Cost reductions were achieved in restructuring some salary costs without reducing services.

The overall result for 2016 was a return to a surplus of \$3,100 reversing a loss in 2015 of \$15,400.

Cash reserves are still strong with \$109,400 in the bank and term deposit accounts.

Challenges in 2017.

Traditionally Stewardship receipts reduce by at least 5% in the year after a program. The age demographic of our regular donators is a risk. We need to be careful of developing dependency on bumper Fete income.

As much as limiting variable expense is a worthwhile enterprise, achieving a balanced budget by limiting variable expenditure is limiting the Parish's ability to deliver religious development programs, outreach programs, youth services, maintenance and so on.

We have had in mind to involve the School community in supporting the parish financially via a compulsory levy. It was hoped to have this levy in place this year however it was decided to postpone the program until 2018 in order to allow the new principal, Duncan Arendse, to settle into his role. The second half of 2017 will be used to liaise with the key stake holders.

*Silvio Volombello – Chairperson,
Parish Finance Committee.*

QUESTION AND ANSWER TIME

Closing Words

*Father Shibu Joseph
Parish Priest*

Closing Song

“Companions on the Journey”