**ANNUAL PARISH MEETING – A BRIEF SUMMARY & THOUGHTS**

Thanks go to those who attended the 2022 Annual Parish Meeting last Sunday in the Community Centre, either in person or via Zoom. Worthy of note:

* The Parish to be in decent shape in almost every sense although this should not be taken as an invitation to rest on laurels but to be a reminder to continue and build on the good work which has seen us through the recent difficult years.
* Fr David’s vision of St James being *a* *Sanctuary of Peace*, extolled at the 2019 meeting, remains very much alive. He reflected not only on how St James coped during the extraordinary COVID years but worked positively during these, flourishing and emerging stronger for the experience. This was possible due to the dedication of parishioners who make up the Pillars and Parish Groups, undertaking so much work to keep St James going. There are simply not enough thanks to recognise the invaluable work undertaken by all concerned.
* Of particular importance was *livestreaming* which commenced during September 2019 - three months before COVID came into our lives. This capability was not possible without the then anonymous generosity of the late Hugh Owen to enable a viable working system to be installed. There is no doubt the Parish owes a huge debt of gratitude to Hugh as his kindliness enabled parishioners plus those beyond to celebrate mass with Fr David who could only do so to empty pews or limited numbers.
* The Pillar Leads each gave a presentation outlining the work undertaken during & subsequent to the COVID years and the attached image produced for the meeting illustrates this to a reasonable extent. Appropriate thanks were expressed for the work of specific individuals & Parish Groups who selflessly give their time to the Parish.
* Going forward, activities by the Pillars and Parish Groups are set to continue unabated for the forthcoming year including, but not limited to:
* a new monthly+weekly Newsletter format to be launched in September.
* the return of Liturgy in full to enhance the celebration of weekly and special masses. Following the footsteps of livestreaming, the Parish is investigating the possibility of a digital projection/audio+visual system for the church.
* a full range of social activities, an imminent one being an *extravaganza* during July for the return of the much-missed Fun Run and Garden Party with this incorporating a celebration to mark Fr David’s 30 years since his ordination into the priesthood.
* a full range of activities and courses for the Parish youth.
* a modification of collections and donations with a significant number of parishioners now favouring to do so by standing order or by cashless card payments.
* launch next month of a two-year St Óscar Romero project by the Justice Peace and Integrity of Creation group, full details of which will be provided at a later date.
* The importance of the use of sophisticated technology to aid the Parish has been recognised. Certain changes have already occurred including the use of Zoom for a wide variety of activities and installation of contactless payment points. As considerably more use of technology is envisaged, a new Technology Pillar isa being formed to address the challenges this brings.
* After the meeting, attendees had the opportunity to speak with Pillar representatives and certain Parish Groups to gain a better understanding of their activities. The efforts and work by willing parishioners is greatly appreciated, but more volunteers would be welcome.

**Diagram

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