



ŌTARI PARISH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

Date

11:15am, Sunday 18th May 2025

Venue

St Teresa's Church

1. Des Tiller welcomed members of the Ōtari Parish to the meeting and Fr Joy with an opening prayer.
2. Benny Tau'Alupe presented a Finance Committee Chair report (attached in the pre-reading meeting pack) including current finance statements, planned parish budget and priorities for parish expenses.

Question from the floor: Why is the rent down at the apartments? One apartment hasn't been occupied for the entire year

3. Benny Tau'Alupe presented the planned giving programme initiative being led by the Office of the General Manager, Archdiocese of Wellington (ADW). The presentation outlined the pressures on parish finances and encourage to share resources. More information will be provided over the coming months.

Question from the floor: What would be the average giving per family on a weekly basis? The Ōtari Parish receives approximately \$25,000 per month. At the meeting the presenters did not have an average family contribution figure. This metric will be provided as the initiative is rolled out.

Question from the floor: In summary is there going to be a fundraising drive to encourage more parishioners to give more? This initiative is being driven across the ADW, not just within our parish. There will be an assessment in August to identify the areas within the archdiocese that need more help and what that help looks like. The ADW was running \$2M deficit which they have reduced it to \$1M. This is a result from the works that were recently completed on the cathedral. St Thomas More Church maintenance – need to update the plan due to recent storm damage.

Question from the floor: You said that we need to pay someone to project manage all that. Is that not something the PPC could manage for us - I'm sceptical about having to pay someone to manage the reroofing the church? It was agreed that ideally, we would like to use in-house project management. The PPC Chair outlined the pressures that our PPC and Finance committee volunteers are under, including the fact that many of the members have day jobs and therefore they have time constraints to undertake such a task. Also, some tasks require certification by professionals to comply with insurance requirements.

Question from the floor: Is there any update on St Thomas More Church closure? A decision on closing the church has not been provided from the ADW. This will need to be linked with the closure of Cardinal McKeefry School and work needed on St Teresa's Church. As discussed in the finance report, we are asset rich but operating at a loss of \$107K annually. We need to strategically assess and allocate funds to protect our assets for the future.

Question from the floor: Is it a given that the apartments will continue to be owned by the Parish? It is all under consideration once we get confirmation from the ADW. The ADW own many of the buildings at the school. We need to hear from them about their intentions before we can proceed.

Question from the floor: Can you breakdown the building works and maintenance into 'we can do it' stuff and the 'project management' stuff so we, the congregation, can see what needs to be done and how we can help? We have been let down by tradespeople in the past and it has cost us, so we are putting our trust in the engineers who recommend the overhaul. Small issues can be shared with parishioners in a position to help. Please see Benny afterward if you are interested in doing so.

Action Point: PPC and Finance Committee create a project team and a funding plan to proceed with the building works.

4. Des Tiller provided a summary of the Pastoral Parish Council (PPC) Chair report and outline the high-level parish plan (attached in the pre-reading meeting pack).
5. Key Parish groups provided an outline of their current and planned work for the year ahead:
 - a. **Justice, Peace and Development Group.** Carolyn Tait provided a presentation on the work the Justice, Peace and Development Group do within our community. They are urged by Pope Leo to bring peace to all. They reach out to put the Catholic Social Teaching principles into action. They are currently collecting items for a new refugee family who are moving to Wellington. They are fundraising to assist with our vision and advocate for those who can't. In place is a plan to publish a monthly newsletter to assist with making people aware of the work they do. They would encourage people to join their group.
 - b. **Liturgy Committee.** Treena Tiller provided a presentation on the work the Liturgy Committee work. They plan all liturgical celebrations in liaison with the leadership team. They hope that all Liturgies are prayerful and meaningful to reflect and meet the needs of the Ōtari Parish faith community. This Jubilee year, they not only plan and coordinate regular Sunday worship, and the Easter, Christmas and Feast Days celebrations, they also prepare for the various jubilee celebrations. Plans are underway for the Pentecost Sunday (Sunday 8th June) and this is also our Parish anniversary. They would love more volunteers willing to take Holy Communion to those who are housebound or in retirement villages, volunteers to prepare our young for the Sacraments and it would be wonderful to have reserves for our Saturday Vigil proclaimers of the word.
 - c. **Family Group.** Catherine Hallagan provided a brief on the Family Group. They comprise of a variety of parishioners. They meet to foster friendship and to strengthen the social fabric of our parish. There is no joining fee and no obligation to attend every event. Everyone is asked to convene or co-host one event every year. These events happen every four to six weeks. They range from walks, poetry citing, games evening, movie afternoons, fish and chip night, and more. Futuna Chapel walk through and a trip to Zealandia are future events. An invitation to join the Parish Family Group was extended – contact Catherine or the parish office.

- d. **Catholic Women's League.** Ethne Wyndham-Smith provided a brief on the Catholic Women's League work. [started in England 1906 & Wellington 1944] has a four-point Mission which they have followed over the years and continue to do so:

- To enhance the spiritual and intellectual growth of members
- To participate in the pastoral life of the Church and wider community
- To be a voice heard in national and international affairs
- To support charitable works in New Zealand and the Pacific

This year's National Collection is for Women's Refuge which helps victims of family violence, so they hope once again that nationally they can raise a substantial sum. Since this was Ōtari Branch's nomination they are very pleased with this year's choice. The group is down to only 15 members and encourage more members to join - working for the good of the church, the community and us.

- e. **Faith Events Team.** Apologies from Melissa who was unwell. Neville Braganza presented on her behalf. The Faith Events Team began in 2017 with Fr Ron. In 2025 they had already had their first faith event – "The Seven Last Words of Jesus" prior to Easter, as well as a one-day retreat with Fr Neil Vaney as guest speaker. Currently they have the "Life in The Spirit" seminar every Thursday evening. They have approximately 45 parishioners attending each of our programmes. If you would like to join their team, please see Fr Joy or Melissa Braganza. Alpha for youth will be our next event in August and ending with an Advent retreat in November.

- f. **Ōtari Parish Youth Group.** Amanda Russell-Kleiner provided a brief on the Ōtari Parish Youth Group. The group was formed last September. They have six adult leaders: Amanda, Miriam, Kiko and Malia, Adri and Mirna. The Youth Group meets once a month. Currently the group ranges in age from 11 to 21 years old. Each session is attended by approximately 30 attendees. They share a meal together then focus discussion on a topic. There are four main areas – grow in their faith, in developing community, participating in liturgical celebrations, and fundraising. They are grateful to the Tongan community who have provided all the food to date. They need your support: Please pray for our Youth and their Leaders. Also please support us with our future fundraising events.

6. **Volunteers.** Des Tiller highlighted that all the groups and committees are made up of volunteers. There is a consistent theme across all groups with the need for more volunteers. The meeting was encouraged to consider volunteering for one or more of the presented groups.
7. Des Tiller thanked all attendees and Fr Tikoua closed with a prayer.