

Ōtari Parish Annual General Meeting

Sunday 14th June 2026

Attendance register circulated:

Jacqueline Wee, Maria Nunns, Jo Gilliat-Smith, Neville Braganza, Melissa Braganza, Delia McCaffrey, Vonnie Nunns, Chris Orsman, Chris Mori, Adri Widyanto, Mike Wekenborg, Ed Santos, Audrey Seeto, Sar Palado, Marion Thorpe, Fr Cirilo, Peter Wood, Ian McFadyen, Barbara Duthie, Carole Haigh, Judith Mulliner, Tanti Agustin, Lawrencía William, Myrna Umali, Amanda Russell-Kleiner, Margaret Lundberg, Felibel Zabala, Adrian Anderson, Michael Gribble, Sheila West, Mike West, Carolyn Tait, Estelle Henrys, Erwin Palado, Ludger Zabala, Stuart Henrys, Treena Tiller, Ethne Wyndham-Smith, Bob Marshall, Lydia Marshall, Premila Rangan, Benny Ta'ualupe, Temara Presland, Des Tiller, Patricia Lynch, Liza Kallarackel, Pat Gee, Andrew Gee, Kathie and David Ross, Michael Bennett, Patricia Bennett, Catherine Vernon

Welcome: Des Tiller, Chair of the Parish Pastoral Council

Opening Prayer: Patricia Lynch, Parish Pastoral Council member

Apologies: Malia Tu'amoheloa

Parish Pastoral Committee Report

Des Tiller presented the PPC Chair report highlighting strong parish life, the ongoing STM transition, development of a Parish Plan, and key challenges relating to resourcing, volunteering, and managing change.

Question from the floor:

Bronwyn Chapman questioned whether “STM closure transition – Managed change with focus on unity, continuity, and pastoral care” shown on slide # 3 is reflective of how STM members are feeling. Des said the PPC set up a transition committee made up of representatives of STM, the PPC, the FC and Fr Joy to ensure the transition is respectful and considerate of the STM parishioners. Des said he couldn't comment on what individual parishioners are feeling.

Bronwyn wanted to know why the PPC don't know how the STM parishioners are feeling. Peter Wood explained he is the only representative from the STM community on the PPC and reiterated the difficulty of STM being heard when there is only one representative on the council. He said he has asked four times in the past year at STM for more people to join the PPC. Des thanked Peter for his role on the PPC and said he was a strong advocate for STM and that his voice is heard.

Finance Committee Report

Benny Tau'alupe talked to the Finance Committee Chair report (current finance statements, planned parish budget and priorities for parish expenses). It was noted that parish finances are currently on an unsustainable trajectory, with expenses growing faster than income and an average annual deficit of approximately \$100,000 over recent years. Forecast scenarios indicate increasing financial pressure if trends continue. The majority of this deficit is due to long overdue maintenance on the presbytery (directed from the Archbishop to look after our priests) and the flats.

Questions from the floor:

Michael Gribble, "Do the costs reflect the new rates?" Answer: Yes

Benny Tau'alupe talked to the slides relating to the planned giving programme: (shared understanding of the pressures on parish finances and encourage to share resources). 60% of income is from planned giving. The Finance Committee is prioritising reducing parish spending. They have come up with a short term plan:

- Prioritise parish spending with "Must have" not "good to have" as their motto. Any expenses will need to be approved by the FC first.
- Implement safeguarding measures
- Encourage volunteering to reduce expenses
- Encourage sharing of resources

Questions from the floor:

Margaret Lundberg asked, "Who owns the Cardinal McKeefry School property?" Answer: The Parish has a monthly lease but the Altum Classic Academy has the liabilities.

Bronwyn Chapman questioned what liabilities? Answer: everyday running costs, rates, insurance, etc.

Catherine Tait inquired, "Has the fact that not all STM parishioners will be coming to StTs after the closure, been taken into account?" Answer: It's a good point, but not taken into account as it is currently unknown.

Bronwyn Chapman: "If the \$100K deficit per year for the past three years is based on property expenses, then if the properties have been fixed, why would we continue to have a \$100K deficit?"

Stuart Henrys answered: The assumption from these graphs is for the expenses to continue. We know we can't sustain that. We plan to reduce the property allocation this year. This means prioritising all costs to ensure we maintain but only what is necessary. We don't anticipate those deferred maintenance costs will continue (those incurred by decades of not spending). Very little money was spent on the properties prior to 2022. Fr Joy pushed for maintenance to be done. We are budgeting a \$30K deficit this year, as we are spending on IT upgrades.

Benny added, "Remember that Covid19 prevented us from doing any maintenance work."

Stuart Henrys, "We know that we need to increase our income - there was a drive last year for increased planned giving.

Questions from the floor:

Chris Orsman asked, "Is our contribution to our ADW negotiable?" Stuart Henrys replied, "No, we are one of the more wealthy parishes."

Chris Orsman, "So what is the ADW doing to reduce their costs?"

Maria Nunns: "The bigger expenditure is about getting on with spending on capital assets"

Erwin Palado asked, "Are we getting new parishioners to join the planned giving?"

Audrey Seeto shared, "Being a greeter I notice newcomers and ask if they are new to the Church/Parish and if yes, I give them a new parishioners form which has planned giving info on it".

Estelle Henrys asked, "Will we need to sell any more of our properties to reduce our deficit?" She talked about previous plans to reduce costs such as selling assets, although it's not good because you don't have the income but is the FC looking at developing the properties for financial gain? Answer: We were told by Cardinal John that we are not in the business of being a property developer.

Bronwyn Chapman asked "What are we doing to attract new parishioners? Do new people know that we will continue to go into deficit if we don't increase our planned giving?" Answer: The General Manager of the Archdiocese met with the Finance Committee last month. Because of the current economic crisis across the country, there will not be a further push right now.

Carolyn Tait spoke: "One possible suggestion is to reach out to elderly parishioners at STM to provide transport to Masses at StTs - this could increase planned giving if we manage to keep our elderly parishioners."

Estelle Henrys redirected the comment for the Parish Pastoral Council as it's not for the Finance Committee to follow up.

Stuart stated there will be a chance to ask more questions shortly.

Parish projects:

St Teresa's Property Refurbishment Committee

Stuart introduced the St Teresa's Property Refurbishment Committee - Peter Dykes, Bob Hall, Michael Bennett, Nael George, Chris Orsman and Stuart Henrys. They established the committee early last year to plan, oversee, and ensure the successful completion of any refurbishment works. They are awaiting a report from King & Dawson (original architects). Once received they will need to engage with the community about a draft design in terms of this building and what needs to be done. K & D report will look at: Watertightness, seismic strengthening, and asbestos treatment. We have a separate budget from the operating costs budget for the refurbishment. This will need a fundraising effort and be phased over a long timeline. The length of the timeline will also likely raise the costs of it.

Questions from the floor:

Kathie Ross asked, "Out of the three recommendations, do we have any Information?" Answer: No.

Brownyn Chapman asked, "Do you have any idea of the budget that you will need; one hundred thousand, one million, ten million?" Answer: No idea of the budget until the reports are received.

Des stopped the discussion because of time, but reassured that they will be engaging with the wider parish community going forward.

St Thomas More Transition Committee

Carolyn Tait introduced the team; Carolyn Tait, Estelle Henrys, Kylie Hall, Peter Wood, Stuart Henrys and Fr Joy.

Carolyn explained the committee is charged to support the Parish Priest, PPC, and PFC in the pastoral, orderly, and respectful transition and closure of St Thomas More Church, with particular attention to people, communication, and practical coordination.

Estelle informed everyone that three key events are being planned and have been advertised in the parish newsletter. On July 17th there is a memorial liturgy with a pot luck dinner and an opportunity to tell stories. On Saturday 29th August is an open day at STM church and in the lounge. They are working to collect as much memorabilia as possible to display in the lounge for people to reminisce followed by formal speeches at 3pm. On Sunday 30th August at 4pm there will be the Farewell Mass - there is no 8:30am Mass that morning. They are also preserving St Thomas More's Church history and story. They are reaching out to past parishioners and anyone associated with STM over the many years.

Peter talked about creating an inventory of all items: Finding the providence of particular items such as those donated by families, finding future homes for sacred items, and working with the parish to decide what will be kept by St Teresa's and what will be donated elsewhere.

Estelle added that she had chatted with parishioners at St Francis of Assisi and learnt that not everyone was consulted about the asset distribution, so she encouraged our community to discuss and consider what we would like to bring across to StTs.

From the floor:

Maria Nunns acknowledged that Moira Chapman, with Estelle, did a huge audit of the assets at STM. May Moira rest in peace.

Mike West explained he used to attend STM and knew that the Stations of the Cross were donated by various parishioners. There was a social committee back in the day. He may have details to assist with the transition committee regarding ownership.

Kylie Hall gave an update on how they are communicating what they are doing: In the parish newsletter, on Facebook, on a whiteboard at STM, emails to STM parishioners, regular reports to FC and PPC, articles in the Welcom, and talking with other faith communities with whom St Thomas More has had a long relationship e.g. Te Pariha o Te Ngākau Tapu, St Anne's Anglican Church, Northland.

Question from the floor:

Bronwyn Chapman wanted to know how people will be included in the liturgy at StTs and if any of the ceremonial differences at STM will be included in the Masses at StTs.

Carolyn Tait ended with inviting StT parishioners to attend STM Masses and get to know them. She promoted the STM Feast day which Estelle has been planning. It is next Sunday at 8:30am.

Review of Mass Times for Otari Parish

Des Tiller informed everyone that there is going to be a Mass Times review. A survey will be undertaken to get parishioner input into preferred worship times. There will be a careful and consultative process considering sustainability and community needs. Recommendations will be shared in August and any new Mass times will take effect from the start of September.

Liturgy Committee report

Treena Tiller, co-chair of the Liturgy Committee addressed Bronwyn's earlier question explaining that the Liturgy Committee has had several discussions at the Liturgy Committee meetings regarding including STM volunteers who wish to continue their ministries at StTs. The names of those STM parishioners who have expressed interest in being involved in ministry at StTs were recently received by the Liturgy Committee. Once Mass times have been finalised the co-ordinators of the various rosters will be reaching out to the STM volunteers to welcome them and include them in the September onward rosters. The Liturgy Committee have already talked about adopting some of the Mass practices from STM into the Masses at StTs.

Question from the floor:

Bronwyn Chapman asked if there were any STM representatives on the Liturgy Committee. Answer: There have always been three members on the committee from STM, however two have recently resigned. Estelle Henrys is currently the only representative on the committee.

I am the Co-chair of the Liturgy Committee of Ōtari Parish. In brief, the Liturgy Committee ensures the smooth running of our weekend Masses, Feast days and extraordinary liturgical events, co-ordinating the groups who provide the various ministries that make our liturgies and Masses so special.

Today, I'm here to promote all ministries within our Parish community. We are a vibrant, active parish community who are united in faith, with over twenty different ministries that support parish life. Several of our ministries are short of volunteers. That said, this year we would also like to offer the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) programme in our Parish, however, we need people to step forward to help this become a reality.

Last year, whilst attending the Hope and Renewal Summit in Palmerston North, a speaker said something that really resonated with me: "We CAN'T be the guests in our parishes. We MUST be the hosts!" If you sit in the pews week after week and watch others being involved, I challenge you to stop being a guest, it's time to be a host.

Each one of us is called to serve the Lord. At the end of every Mass we are sent out to "Go in peace, to love and serve the Lord". Please consider what talents you could offer to any or many of the various ministries of our church. Contact the Parish Office, or speak to one of the PPC members, or chat with me, if you want to know more.

Thank you.

Treena Tiller

From the floor:

Estelle asked Treena to say the speech at every Mass.

Parish Youth Presentation

Last year was our first full year running the youth group, and we're well into our second year now. The age range of our group members was 12 to 21, which is obviously way too broad an age range for this kind of group, so we're excited to be just starting up a young adult group which is being led by Malia, Fr Joy and Treena.

Our two primary focuses right now for the group are faith formation and social connection. With regard to faith formation, we are coming to the end of our journey through the story of salvation history as told through the narrative books of the Bible. That will form the backbone of our ongoing faith formation.

As for our other projects:

- We're looking into getting a license so we can start holding movie nights for our youth
- We're going to talk with our youth about getting a group together to attend the ADW Youth Festival in July
- We're looking into sending a group of our youth to the LifeTeen summer camp

next January which will likely require a bit of fundraising.

We're trying to make the group self-funding as much as possible. Our major expense currently is the meals we share during our meetings. Last year the Tongan community provided the funds for many of the meals, and the youth team leaders donated the rest. We had two very successful fundraisers in December:

Our garage sale was a great success thanks to the generous donation of goods by our parishioners and our net profit was \$1137.40 which we are using to provide the meals for our meetings this year.

We also had our Christmas Carols Concert which raised \$1525, all of which was donated to Yon, one of our youth group members, his mother Mary and his grandmother Martha who lost their home in a house fire just before the concert.

We're always grateful for support, so if you are young at heart and feel drawn to this ministry or know someone who would be a good fit, or if you have suggestions or questions, please come chat with us. Adri is one of our team leaders and both he and I would be very happy to talk with you.

We ask your support in our fundraising later in the year, but in the meantime, we really beg your prayers, both for the youth of our parish, and for this ministry. Our youth and young adult groups will die without the life-giving presence of the Holy Spirit, so we implore your prayers for the group.

Thank you!

Amanda Russell-Kleiner

Faith Formation Team Report

Thank you everyone for supporting our Faith formation team this year- whether it is by prayer, a word of encouragement, volunteering to support an event and most of all for joining and participating in our programmes.

This year we started our planning by looking at feedback from previous programmes held last year Youth Alpha (very successful pastoral area programme) A Lenten retreat with Fr Neil Vaney and our Advent retreat on board with regards to offering shorter events and programmes to our church community as well.

2026 - Our team plans and runs events/ programmes quarterly based on focus areas (draft plan -such as youth, new parishioners, seasonal liturgical formation events , parish and pastoral area events and programmes etc)

For Feb- April : We offered " The Seven last words of Jesus during Lent (seven Thursdays) which was well attended.

May- June : We are currently running- A scripture study based on the lectio- divina style Future events are to be confirmed and will be advertised accordingly. Our team will be meeting in July to plan more.

Aug- Oct : Leadership day (aimed at our year 7-13 students aged 11-16 year olds) with games, food and a focus on Jesus as a role model leader. This will be advertised as a pastoral initiative.

We will also be advertising and working collaboratively with Sacred Heart Cathedral parish and St Mary of the Angels parish to promote Alpha which will be held at Connolly hall in Aug- Sept .

Dates are to be confirmed. Otari parishioners are encouraged to attend.

Nov-Dec: Young adults reflection & discernment retreat day aimed at 18-35 year old's (pastoral initiative).

Parish Advent half day retreat (this was well received and successful last year 2025 and we aim to repeat this again this year).

Lastly, the faith formation team would like to invite each of you to take up this opportunity to join our programmes and faith formation activities in continuing to build up our church especially when our parish community faces challenging times ahead. It is our faith that keeps us going!

Melissa Braganza
(for the Faith Formation Team)

Invitation for parishioners to consider volunteer opportunities

Des Tiller reiterated the need for people to volunteer their services across the parish ministries.

Questions from the floor:

Erwin: Ages ago, part of our welcome pack was a description of the various ministries and planned giving options - do we still do that?

Answer: Chris did something like that recently, we will follow up.

Closing Prayer: Peter Wood, Parish Pastoral Council member

Attached documents:

PPC Chair Report

Finance Committee Slides