LETTER FROM THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

Dear Parishioners,

On behalf of the Parish Pastoral Council, I wish you the joy and peace which the Infant Jesus offers us during this beautiful season.  I would also like to offer you a review of our work in 2019.

Looking back, it has been a year of significant new beginnings for the Parish Pastoral Council, laying the ground for what we hope to achieve in the coming year.  Our primary task, as a PPC, is to provide spiritual leadership, offering opportunities for faith formation, prayer and Christian service, also for reaching out to bring Christ’s love to those on the margins, those in most need.  To do all this we need the guidance of the Holy Spirit.  Prayer is prominent in our meetings.  We also need to listen to each other, to the wider Church, and particularly to you, our parishioners, as we discern our way ahead.  Planning practical projects to build us up as a faith community and extend our mission is an important aspect of our work.  All of this is demanding, and we continue to rely on your ideas and suggestions, your practical cooperation, and crucially, your prayers.

The flow of the past year really began with the Parish Assembly we organised in November 2018 in response to Archbishop Diarmuid Martin's request to parishes, following Pope Francis' visit in August. It was well attended and afterwards we got down to the considerable task of processing the feedback. We gradually simplified it down to a set of bullet points for presentation back to you.

One of those bullet points under “What is missing?” is “Helping Parishioners to increase their faith and that of their children”.  In March, we organised the “Week of Guided Prayer” facilitated by a team from the Archdiocese who were impressed with the level of participation. The Week included daily individual spiritual direction and a commitment to daily prayer with scripture. The participants feedback was hugely positive. In September, we promoted “Faith for Life” held in Holy Cross Diocesan Centre.  Six parishioners are currently engaged in this in-depth process of faith development (actually the largest of any parish group in the diocese).

Another bullet point under “What is not working well?” is “Communication of all types and at all levels needs improvement”. While much remains to be done, our website ([enniskerryparish.ie](http://enniskerryparish.ie" \t "_blank)) has been completely refurbished this year, including updated information (check out the PPC!) and providing spiritual nourishment through links that change frequently.  We also reviewed the Parish Link and Mass leaflets, and brought in new material introducing a new combined format.

This is just a beginning of what the possibilities are.  A sub-group of three members continued to work on the Assembly feedback throughout the Summer, drawing it together into a strategy and action plan. This is still in process.

It was also a year of big change and renewal for us as a Council.  Patricia Carroll, from the Diocesan Office with responsibility for parishes, began to work with us in June. This led to a nomination process in September. All nominees were offered a training day on October 12th, and a group of five men and five women were publicly commissioned in St Mary’s on Sunday, November 17th, committing to serve for three years.

Because the Parish Pastoral Council is tasked to be the "eyes and ears of the Parish" we need to be a strong, visible presence for everyone.  Therefore, you will soon see photos and names of Council members displayed in the church porches. If you have any ideas, concerns or inspirations which might help us to grow as a Christian community and spread the Good News of Jesus Christ, you are welcome to approach any of us personally. We are here to serve.

May the peace and grace of Our Infant Saviour be with you all,

**Sally Phalan   Chair,  PPC**