



St Francis of Assisi Ohariu Parish

Ministry Reports

2019

St Francis of Assisi Parish, Ohariu

Re-imagining our Parish in a new era of being Church

“The Church has always had the duty of scrutinizing the signs of the times and of interpreting them in the light of the Gospel.” Vatican II, *Gaudium et Spes* (n. 4):

1. Introduction

In May 2013, Cardinal John requested the people of the Wellington North Pastoral Area to provide feedback on a proposed merger of the three parishes of St Benedict’s, Sts Peter and Paul, and St Andrew’s. We were urged to consider new and exciting ways in which we might re-imagine the role and the mission of our Church in the world. Underpinning this renewal was the concept of **“A Future Full of Hope”**.

At the time we saw the merger broadly:

as an opportunity to renew our communities and share human, spiritual, financial and physical resources and to explore different ways of spreading the Gospel. This was often expressed in the context of a desire to reclaim and harness the spirit of Vatican II – to be living witnesses to the Gospel in the world, delighting in belonging, participating and giving.

The people of a merged parish could develop a new vision and plan that would not be possible in the smaller parish groups. Using combined resources, strengths and facilities new, fresh ways of living the Gospel might be developed. Ways of praying together, faith formation, social activities and adult-educational opportunities would be enriched with a wider and more culturally-diverse pool of people.

We find ourselves now in a position to take the steps necessary to realise this vision – in line with the mandate that emerged from the diocesan consultation; in line with Cardinal John’s request to imagine a new and exciting way of being church; in line with Pope Francis’ call to be bold and take risks so as to bring about a greater penetration of Christian values in the social, political and economic sectors; and in line with the Second Vatican Council’s challenge to pastors to recognize and promote the dignity as well as the responsibility of the laity in the Church and in the world.

2. Our Vision

It is a challenge to live out our Christian faith in the current church, societal and political structures. We embrace a vision of Church grounded in the Vatican II vision of baptism as the fundamental call to discipleship and lived out as a partnership between laity and clergy. We envisage a parish that is strong in its faith in Jesus Christ and centered on the Eucharist – a parish where the intrinsic dignity of all is reflected in its spiritual, social and political structures and practices and where every person sees themselves as called to evangelise.

We are a welcoming, hospitable, inclusive, vibrant and loving Eucharistic community from diverse traditions and cultures. We choose to live the Gospel by:

- **Consciously accepting our baptismal call to live as Jesus lived and be instruments of love, hope & mercy ...**
- **Opening our hearts and our doors to all people ...**
- **Showing creative leadership in a time of transition within the Church and society ...**
- **Taking responsibility for the growth of our faith and spirituality – personally and collectively ...**
- **Challenging one another to make our community, the Church and the world a more just place ...**
- **Reaching out to care for and serve each other, with a special commitment to those on the periphery ...**
- **Protecting and managing the resources that have been given to us, with a special commitment to the integrity of all creation ...**

3. Bringing the vision to Life

In light of changes in society and the Church, we commit ourselves to bringing this vision into being through a structure better placed to meet the "signs of the times". We seek to bring about a future full of hope by way of a collaborative model of leadership, pastoral ministry and service; a model in which:

- the laity appropriately and necessarily take a more active, visible, responsible and accountable role in the leadership and administration of the parish
- there is a mutual relationship of support and dependence between laity and clergy - a collaborative team approach across the distinct cultures and communities of the parish
- we are better equipped for a time when constraints on the availability of priests will require a different approach to pastoral care and to liturgical and sacramental celebrations including preaching, catechetics and adult education, baptisms, marriages and funerals
- people are well formed in the Scriptures, theology, spirituality and social justice

We acknowledge that the 'new' model we have in mind will take time to implement. **We see that we are in an important transition stage.**

This stage may, from the outside, not look too different from the current model. **Critically, however, it will be distinguished by a particular mindset, vision and a purposeful and explicit strategy that seeks, within two years, to have in place the structures and lay personnel capable of meeting the liturgical, spiritual, educational, justice and pastoral needs of a vibrant parish that is living out its Eucharistic mandate.**

To that end we propose:

- To revitalise the parish as a vital Eucharistic community through a fresh approach to the various pastoral, liturgical and evangelical ministries that centres on the animation of key service groups

- Appointing a Lay Pastoral Leader to provide a pivotal leadership and administrative role
- Scriptural, theological, sacramental and pastoral training opportunities that will upskill lay people to exercise key functions that flow out of our baptismal call

4. Concluding Comments

We readily accept that not everything is known, that not every contingency can be anticipated and that some questions remain unanswered or yet to be asked. We accept that mistakes may be made. We also acknowledge that some may see this model as a threat to an older Church model in which they have grown up and feel secure, but one which we believe is no longer sustainable in the long-term given the "signs of the times".

We remain confident that, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the support of those in key Archdiocesan leadership roles, what we are proposing will not only see us survive as a parish community but also help us to find new and effective ways of living out the demands and challenges of the Gospel and carrying out the Church's mission in the world.

St Francis of Assisi Ohariu Leadership Formation Team October 2019

St Francis of Assisi Ohariu has three Liturgy groups -

one for each Church community. The Liturgy groups ensure that weekend Masses are prepared carefully and flow well. Four times a year representatives from each of the three groups come together for a combined meeting, to share ideas and resources and to prepare for big events eg Easter, Christmas.

When we come to weekend Masses, parishioners may not be aware of all the work that is done beforehand, week after week to make the Church and the Liturgy welcoming and inclusive.

We take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank all those who work behind the scenes;

- those who clean our Churches, arrange the flowers, wash and iron the altar linen:
- those who open and close our Churches, turn on heaters, and make sure the Church is warm and safe.
- our sacristans, who prepare the altar before Mass and tidy things away after Mass. They keep an eye on all that we need for a celebration of Eucharist.
- Sacristans often welcome our Priests and make sure they have what they need.
- people who participate in and contribute to our celebration of Eucharist: Musicians, Altar Servers, Proclaimers of the Word, Ministers of Eucharist.

We are deeply indebted to all of these people

St Peter and Paul's Liturgy Group

The group has responsibility for liturgical celebrations at St Peter and Paul's. This includes weekend Masses, Wednesday Masses with older parishioners, Reconciliation, support for families preparing weddings and funerals and various special occasions. Traditionally members of the St Peter and Paul's liturgy group have recruited and trained Proclaimers of the Word, Ministers of Eucharist and Altar Servers. They liaise with other groups involved with liturgy (music groups, sacristans, Challenge 2000, community groups.)

During this time of transition the St Peter and Paul's liturgy group is working carefully with LFT and passing on traditions and needs of the local church community.

Wendy Cleaver cleaver@actrix.gen.nz 027 2696209

St Benedict's Community Liturgy report

This committee meets on the first Tuesday of every month and deals with all liturgy matters and any other requirements of our community.

- Introduced Te Reo Maori response to "Prayers of the faithful" at two Sunday masses each month.
- St Benedict's School now very much a part of the weekly parish masses or liturgies as well as preparing Lenten Stations of the Cross and preparing their own whole of school masses each term.

This next year will require more input from our community into the day to day continuation of every ministry, liturgy and ceremony. We have seen some new people prepared to step in to replace our aging helpers in every area of ministry. What we need is the willingness of every member of the community and parish to ensure that at some stage they serve or contribute in just ONE area of ministry. Share the load, lighten the load and enjoy the fellowship and joy of participation.

Our current Liturgy group is Tony de Joux, Margie Crook, Katrin Eickhorst, Tim Hanlon, Michael Hinds, Teresa Preston and Bernard Whaanga.

Chairperson Bernard Whaanga terber@xtra.co.nz

St Andrews Mass planning/liturgy committee was formed at the same time as the St Andrew' Committee. The purpose of this group is to look ahead in the liturgical calendar and plan masses and events that complement the liturgy of that Sunday.

The people that make up the group include the church sacristan, mass coordinator, children's liturgy facilitators, musicians and other people who have knowledge and a passion for liturgy. We have found it useful to look ahead in time and plan, so that there is value added to our masses. Our aim is to develop a community that wants to come to mass and share of themselves with others.

We aim to meet on a regular basis for an hour and welcome people interested in liturgy and mass to join us in our mission. The more cultures represented on our team the more vibrant will be the outcome at mass celebrations and community events.

Marushka Caldeiro caldeiromi@gmail.com

Children's Liturgy - St Benedict's Church

We have seen a great attendance at Children's liturgy so far this year, with average numbers of around 20 children each Sunday. When Sacramental sessions are on, this number swells to at least 40, so 2 groups are run on these days. A wide range of ages are in attendance, and the children are actively involved in discussions and completing worksheets. The reporting back to the congregation at the end of the session is always appreciated by all. We have a committed group of 8 liturgy leaders. At least half of us have older children who no longer attend the sessions. New liturgy leaders would be appreciated, but are somewhat hard to find.

Last year we had very successful children's Advent mass and Christmas family mass. The nativity play was a highlight with over 30 children involved, all playing roles such as Wise men, Mary, Joseph, shepherds, angels, animals (including the donkey, and a worm).

In the coming months we look forward to preparing for Advent and the Christmas season. We will need some clarification on the role of Challenge during this time, so we know what is required from our team.

Angela Houston 971 6977

Children's Liturgy at St. Andrew's Church

At St. Andrew's Church, the Children's Liturgy is very special and unique. The children are invited up to the altar for blessings, as the Mass commences. Then they are sent out to listen the Readings of the day. They are taught about God's love and the life of Jesus.

They are given worksheets and puzzles to encrypt, prayers to read and songs to sing. These are then read or shared, and sung at the altar just before the Offertory. They are rewarded with applause from the congregation and happy faces from their parents.

The approximate attendance varies between 10 to 30 children, ages from as young as 5 years to 12 years old. The children that attend, come from various ethnicities and cultures.

We have a small group of volunteers that are rostered, from adults, young adults and Challenge 2000, all within the Parish community.

The Children's Liturgy celebrate most special events like Easter, Advent (Jesse tree), Christmas (Nativity play enacted by the children) Mother's day, Father's Day and Children's day

The Children's liturgy at St. Andrew's church promotes a safe learning and supervised environment and all are welcome.

Propose to have more resources for the future

- Engage more Children and youth for the Ministry to grow
- Encourage children to be future Altar servers and lead within the Ministry
- More adult volunteers
- TV, monitored WIFI.
- External resources like camps, outdoor activities with parent consent.

Stephanie D'Mello 0211893441 stephaniedmello@hotmail.com

Children's Liturgy – St Peter & Paul's Church

Mission: To make Jesus real to the children.

Children's liturgy is currently celebrated at the Sunday 9.00am and 10.30 Mass at St Peter & Paul's Church in Johnsonville. Numbers are approximately 10-15 at the 9 am Mass and up to 35 children from a diverse ethnic background at the 10.30 Mass. The children celebrate the liturgy of the word appropriate to their age. They have a Penitential Rite for Children followed by a children's version of the Sunday Gospel. After the Gospel they share in various activities to reinforce the gospel message. The children return to Mass at the Preparation of the Gifts to celebrate the Eucharist with their families and the rest of the congregation. Children under 4 should be accompanied by a parent. Every year we produce a photoshoot with the children for the Christmas family Mass depicting the story of the birth of Jesus.

There is no Children's Liturgy on Long weekends or in the School Holidays

Carol Burns ohariuparish@xtra.co.nz

Prayer Network

The Prayer Network was set up to provide prayerful support to Parishioners, family and friends and has been going in this Parish for well over 20 years. When a person contacts me with a Prayer Request, I forward this on via email or phone to the people on the Network.

If anyone wishes to be part of the Prayer Network or wishes to have prayers said for a special need, please *contact* dandkdobson@supermail.co.nz

Baptism Ministry Report

Our mission is to support those preparing for baptisms.

Baptism preparation is done with the co-ordinators at home. Baptisms are planned for the third Sunday of each month, usually at 2pm. The activities of our ministry are to facilitate and assist parents/guardians to prepare and organise for their child's baptism, and to help young adults prepare for their own baptism.

We meet with the parents/guardians/young people at home; assist in organising dates/times and special requirements; encouraging full participation of family/friends.

We also assist in developing baptism liturgies (especially outside mass liturgies); encouraging parents/guardians to recognise their role as first and most important teachers and guides for their child's Christian upbringing and understanding of Jesus.

We are currently in the process of training 6 new members to work across our Parish. So far this year 35 Baptisms have been celebrated.

The Baptism Co-ordinator is Kevin Rodrigues 977 1664 kevinrodrigues64@yahoo.com

Parish Music Ministry

In past year, under the direction of Pat Collier:

1. Have ensured that all Masses and many liturgies are covered musically.
2. Have prepared copyright returns as required by the law, the Archdiocese and moral obligation.
3. Have worked together to build relationships with musicians throughout the Parish and within each community.
4. Have researched and analyzed new liturgical compositions, and have used settings and hymns from a number of cultural contributors.

For the future, we aim to continue the good work of previous years and develop ideas arising from the new directions within the Parish. Such as:

1. Working closely with the LFT, Theme groups, and other such Ministries as Liturgy and Bereavement to advise on and provide appropriate music for any Liturgical celebration.
2. Ensuring a fair and reasonable representation of all types of Liturgical music is maintained throughout the Parish.
3. Welcoming new music ministers, encouraging and advising existing ministers, working towards a common core of accessible music.

David Dobson dandkdobson@supermail.co.nz

St Benedict's Ministry of Music Report

Parish musicians (Organists, Music Group members, Cantors, the Parish Choir, and instrumentalists) have provided music at most Vigil and Sunday Masses and 1st Saturday services as well as on other special occasions during the year, including Rite II Reconciliation, Confirmation, First Communion, the Ngaio Ecumenical Service, Requiem Masses, Anointing Masses and Weddings.

We are part of the wider Parish Music ministry, and liaise with the LFT and Liturgy committees. Rosters and Hymn lists are prepared throughout the year.

Music Group: The music group leads the music at 2 or 3 Masses per month, including the 5th Saturday, and includes a wide range of music in its repertoire. The Music Group sang at the Confirmation and First Communion Masses, and assists with Parish-School Masses.

Judith Shroff, Co-ordinator of Music, St Benedict's Parish 021 2031144

Teresa & Bernard music group leaders 027 5877511

Bereavement Group St Peter & Paul's

This group meets once a year in October to organise the St Peter and Paul's Remembrance Mass which is usually held in November. At the Mass bereaved are invited to light a small candle and present a flower to remember their loved ones. This is set up at the foot of the altar. Families have been contacted and invited to take part in the Readings, Prayers of the Faithful, Offertory, Altar Servers and Ministers of the Eucharist. A member of the Music Ministry leads us in the singing. A light supper is provided after the Mass.

I send out Sympathy cards, 1st year Anniversary cards throughout the year and a personal invitation to the Remembrance Mass to bereaved parishioners. Parishioners are invited to let me know if they know of parishioners from St Francis of Assisi Parish who have lost loved ones.

Katharina Dobson dandkdobson@supermail.co.nz cellphone 0273273609

Welcome Ministry Johnsonville

We start with the belief that a warm welcome is really important. This is particularly so when individuals and families are attending Mass on a Sunday or on a Saturday evening. To help ensure that this happens we support all those who are involved in the Greeter Ministry, especially those who have newly become greeters. A smile and a friendly "hello" are great icebreakers, especially as this is often the first contact that a person has when they arrive at the church.

Another, equally important, role is the opportunity to visit those individuals and families who are newly arrived in the parish. This is a friendly, informal occasion when we provide an introduction to what is happening in our parish, and a point of contact.

We also provide morning tea after the 9am Mass at St Peter and Paul's church on the first Sunday of each month. This takes a short time and is an excellent opportunity to chat with old friends and to meet other parishioners for the first time. Closer to Christmas this occasion takes place after the Saturday evening Mass, and is a little more festive.

We have also provided and helped on other occasions, such as celebrating the Parish feast day. Earlier we organised a "Celebrate Diversity" event on a Sunday afternoon that showcased some of the breadth of knowledge, expertise and talent within the 3 churches. We were looking for more opportunities for this kind of event, and hope that these will occur in the future.

We are always on the lookout for others who would like to be involved in this important Ministry, and we have had an initial conversation with both St Andrew's and St Benedict's as a prelude to working more closely together.

Kevin McCormack kevinmac@actrix.co.nz

Sacramental Programme

St Francis of Assisi, Ohariu Sacramental programme is available to all children who have been baptised into the Catholic faith and reached Year 4 or above in the primary school system. During the course of the year, candidates work through the programme with the assistance and support of their families and the Parish to receive the sacraments of Reconciliation, Confirmation and First Holy Communion. Sessions are a mixture of home and parish - based learning. This is a rewarding and deeply spiritual experience designed to give all those involved a closer relationship to God and a deeper

Coordinators in the Parish are Carol Burns, Mike Byrne and Clare Byrne

Focolare Movement

Past year involvement

- Participation in a choir SS Peter and Paul
- Children's Liturgy at 9am Mass Sunday SS Peter and Paul
- Reading Pope Francis over a 6 week period Sept to November
- Monthly Faith sharing group
- Monthly Word of Life meeting that a number of Parish adults and youth attend
- Once a month Sunday afternoon meeting for 4-8 years old and parents
- Ministers of the Eucharist (when there is need)
- Daily liturgy readers (when there is need)
- Maintenance in the three church communities

New Year 2020 involvement

- Participation in a choir SS Peter and Paul
- Children's Liturgy at 9am Mass Sunday SS Peter and Paul
- Hopefully some form of Spiritual sharing/reading monthly.
- Monthly Faith sharing group
- Monthly Word of Life meeting that a number of Parish adults and youth attend
- Once a month Sunday afternoon meeting for 4-8 years old and parents
- Ministers of the Eucharist (when there is need)
- Daily liturgy readers (when there is need)
- Maintenance in the three church communities

Contact: - Ian Hamilton 022 544 3872 ianhamilton751@gmail.com

Visiting the Sick

A team of dedicated parishioners in each of our church communities regularly visit people who live at home, or in one of the four rest homes in our Parish area.

The Ministry involves :

- Holy Communion
- Prayers
- Conversation
- Liaison with the Family

Members of the visiting group have met recently to deepen their understanding and to share their experiences and resources.

Interested parishioners have also been contacted regarding their availability for home visiting.

Fr. John Pettit is available on Tuesdays to administer the Sacrament of the Sick and to give assistance when required.

The contact details of the visitors are on all church notice boards or they can be obtained from the Parish Office.

Pauline White. (On behalf of the Visiting Group)

Pauline White paulinetedw@gmail.com

Reverence for Life Group

The reverence for Life Group started in 2001. The idea came from a Gospel of life seminar held in the Parish nearly 2 years prior. It was to maintain it's commitment to fostering a culture of Life, an ongoing ritual was needed so that the vision would not be lost. Today the Reverence for Life group is still going, meeting monthly in prayer and producing items for the Book of life which is taken up in the offertory on the first weekend of the month.

The group has made submissions to Parliament and to Parliamentarians about the Abortion Law Act and the Euthanasia Bill which is before Parliament. We believe that from conception to natural death, every life is special and should be protected under law. We have a billboard on the corner of Broderick and Moorefield Roads "Every Life is a Gift", sponsored by the Parish.

Current members are Ewen and Gillian Laurenson, Sr Cyprian, Carol Ryan, Helen Cross, Sr Judith and Joanne Gordon. New members are welcome

All contributions to the book are welcomed and can be emailed to Carol Ryan at

carol.may.ryan@gmail.com

Joanne Gordon janhopelucky@gmail.com

Christian Meditation Report

The Christian Meditation group gathers together every Monday evening at 7pm in the church foyer to meditate and support each other in our meditation practice.

When we meditate we are not thinking about God or speaking to God. We are simply being with God in the silence and stillness of the present moment. Christian Meditation does not replace other forms of prayer, it adds to their richness.

We begin with a short teaching about Christian Meditation, then meditate together for 20 minutes, then there is usually some discussion after the meditation. Our gatherings are usually over in 40 minutes.

There are seven regular members with others sometimes dropping in who are meditators and visiting Wellington or those who are interested to know what Christian Meditation is all about. All are welcome. This is an open group. No one is an expert meditator – we are all learning.

Linda Polaschek, ph 04 4797955, 020 4797955

Marian Mothers

Marian Mothers was started by Fr John Allardyce of the Society of Mary in 1981 in response to a need by mothers at home with young children to grow and develop their faith and to provide them with support, encouragement and friendship with other mothers.

A group, meeting in the day time was started in Johnsonville in 1982 which over the years evolved into an evening group now made up of mainly mothers with adult children. Later a second day time group was begun of mainly new mothers with preschool and school aged children. Meetings follow a format of listening to scripture and a reflection prepared by Marist Laity, followed by faith sharing and prayer. Over the years as well as the monthly meetings, the evening group has provided practical support to each other especially in times of sickness and bereavement and attended reflection days and other events together. For the past few years members have been supporting the Marist Mission in Ranong with an annual donation. The day time group activities have included a Blessing for Families with Fr John Allardyce and Pot Luck lunches with their families.

The evening group meet on the second Monday of the month (except January). The day time group meets on the third Monday of the month.

Meetings are generally advertised in the church newsletter.

Joanne Byrne byrnejoannem@gmail.com Mobile: 021 0436856

St Andrew's Committee Team (SAC)

St Andrew's Committee Team (SAC) was formed back in early 2018 as a fall out from ongoing meetings held with the St Andrew's parishioners after St Andrew's was closed in the middle of 2017. The original SAC team was made up of 8 members. Some SAC members have stepped down and we have now new ones join us with a current total of 12 members. We developed a vision and mission to keep us focused and two strategic goals.

Our Vision:

Our local church (St Andrew's) is the footprint and continuous hope for our spiritual lives. "People, people, people – being the face of Christ in our parishes, not just at the end of emails."

Our Mission:

St Andrew's recognises each individual parishioner for their spiritual journey by the story of their faith being told from birth, to important celebrations, to the end of their lives. Our church is our pathway throughout our spiritual lives.

Strategic Goals:

Place of Worship – To be safe for future generations

'Church buildings are open, welcoming at all times' – Synod '17, Priority 4'

- Maintain a safe environment.
- Future proof church and surroundings.
- Become self-sufficient financially.

Church Community – Rebuild/Restore & Grow

'People are the Church's primary asset – Synod 17, Priorities 1 to 13'

- Planned church services.
- Planned community activities.
- Improving communication with parishioners.
- Developing sustainable community groups.
- Increasing number of parishioners.

Our Vision, Mission and Strategic Goals reflect priorities outlined in the Synod 2017. We are committed to working as one to deepen the relationship and spirituality within our multicultural communities.

When the Leadership Formation Team (LFT) was put in place by the Cardinal – the SAC team felt it was important to develop a working relationship with the team for the future of St Francis of Assisi Ohariu Parish – hence 2 of our SAC members requested places on the team and are now part of the LFT.

The SAC team portfolios of finance, building including health & safety and liturgy align well with the LFT portfolios. In the SAC team we have members that oversee finances, a group of people who help with building maintenance and a third group responsible for coordinating masses e.g. music choir and services. With the support of this group and the wider community at St Andrew's we have saved money, come up with fantastic ideas to bring the community together and most of all are communicating with our parishioners.

We have lived the value of having a small team looking after our church and local community. Our SAC team would like to invite interested members of St Peter & Paul's and St Benedict's to set up a team in your own churches, join us for our meetings and be supported by us to develop your own team.

Marushka Caldeiro caldeiromi@gmail.com

Anna Mika-Hunt budgie666@gmail.com

Onslow Catholic Women's League

The Onslow Catholic Women's League has been active for more than 50 years, firstly in Onslow Parish and now in the wider area of St Francis of Assisi, Ohariu; it has a representative on the National Council of Women, and is affiliated to the World Union of Catholic Women's Organisations. The CWL motto is 'Faith and Service', and this is carried out within the Parish and the wider Church Community. Meetings are held regularly, usually on the 4th Tuesday of each month at St Benedict's Church, Khandallah, and we occasionally join up for shared meetings with our sister branch in Karori.

Each year all the branches of the CWL in New Zealand collect funds for the 'At Home' Appeal, donating money to the Appeal from our various fund-raising ventures. Onslow CWL also support our Mission Station in Lomary, in Fiji, by sending money to make the lives of the schoolchildren and the nuns that little bit easier.

The 2019 At Home Appeal is the Tourette's Association NZ, which exists to support New Zealand children, teenagers and adults diagnosed with Tourette's, as well as the family members, caregivers and friends who care for them, while promoting tolerance and acceptance of Tourette Syndrome within the Community.

Any women from the parish are warmly invited to attend our meetings, and new members very welcome.

Margie Crook 977 7097 m_crook_nz@yahoo.com

Youth Ministry - Challenge 2000

Challenge 2000 began as part of Saint Peter and Paul's Parish in 1988. The first office was in the presbytery kitchen. Initially it was a youth project that worked to support young people. Over the past thirty one year's Challenge 2000 has grown into a respected agency that serves the community, our church and the wider Wellington region.

In the parish of St Francis of Assisi Ohariu our Youth Ministry team helps to prepare a monthly Children's Mass at St Benedict's and a Youth Mass at St Peter and Paul's. The team also supports St Brigid's School Pasifika Group, provides some lunchtime support and supervision for children as well as helping to encourage the children's participation in Tuesday morning liturgies or Masses.

Challenge is committed to the formation and faith development of young people across the parish and from time to time offers opportunities for study and prayer, community and fun. One of the philosophies of Challenge is "learn by doing". Young people are encouraged to participate in all sorts of activities and to offer support for parishioners and parish events. (eg Children's Day, combined Masses and celebrations, parish meetings,, visiting speakers etc.) There is an annual Pilgrimage to sacred catholic places every December and two retreat weekends a year at Kopua.

In the parish and in the community Challenge 2000 provides mentoring support, holiday programmes, driver's licence training and tutoring for exams. Many parishioners have been grateful for cheerful muscle power provided by the 'mission's team'.

All young people in the Parish are welcome to join activities organised by Challenge.

Kitty McKinley kittymckinley@xtra.co.nz 021 491459

St Vincent de Paul Society St Francis of Assisi Ohariu Parish

The St Francis of Assisi Ohariu Parish is unique insofar as it has three conferences in one parish. This is a carryover from the days when the three communities of the Ohariu parish were three separate parishes. Conversations have been ongoing as to whether we should still maintain three separate conference or merge them into one. There are arguments for both sides of the issue. Once a considered decision has been made, all concerned will be informed. Meanwhile, the three conferences continue to focus on the mission and vision of the society. These are:

Mission – To live the gospel message by serving Christ in the poor with love, respect, justice, hope, and joy, and by working to shape a more just and compassionate society.

Vision – Vincentians work to provide person to person, practical and effective help to those in need; sharing their burdens and joys; sowing seeds of hope, and prompting human dignity, justice, and self-sufficiency.

The Johnsonville St Vincent de Paul Society continues to help the poor, lonely and sick in our local area. Over the past year our members provided dozens of one-off food parcels to locals who were financially struggling; weekly distributed leftover bread from Nada Bakery to needy families; provided Christmas hampers to almost 200 people; organised two luncheons after anointing-of-the-sick Masses at Sts Peter and Paul's Church for over 60 people; and recently provided spring hampers to 20 people. Our members also regularly visit the elderly at Malvina Major retirement home; help out at the soup kitchen once every two weeks and volunteer at our local Vinnies second hand shop once a month. If you know of any poor, lonely or sick that need help please do not hesitate to contact *Justin Shaw on 027 587 8467*.

The Onslow St Vincent de Paul Society has gone through some changes. After six years at the helm, Graeme P Dee has stepped down as President and has been replaced by Eustie Kamath. The conference still continues to get support from various persons within the parish in the form of donations and information that help us in our work. The donations come in various forms – cash, kind (new and used items) and time to assist those in need. In the midst of winter, we received a donation of a large number of new hot water bottles. These were distributed to refugees most in need across Wellington by members of the Society and the in-house full-time social worker employed by the Society. We receive information on the individuals most in need of food parcels, visits, transport to/from doctors/hospitals etc. During the current year over 200 food parcels were delivered, 120 visits and a number of persons to whom transport was provided. Cash grants were made to schools in the area to assist families that otherwise would not have been able to send their children to school camp. Occasionally, we recommend to some families to contact the in-house social worker who deals with issues that need the specialised assistance.

We continue to seek assistance from members of the parish to let us know the names of persons/families that are in need of assistance. If you do, please contact *Eustie Kamath – 022-3878435 or 5509240*.

Supporting Resettling Families

Our parish has been supporting refugee families to resettle in Wellington since February 2016.

A dedicated team of parishioners have worked closely with Catholic Social Services and the local Red Cross office to turn a house into a home. What does this mean?

Everything needs to be provided to help these families get started. They come with suitcases only.

Through the parish's generosity of donating goods and funds, the team collects and buys everything from towels, bedding, toys, utensils, and microwaves to an ironing board! Our local St Vincent de Paul team provide a great array of pantry items and fresh produce. We walk into a near-empty house and a couple of hours later, beds are made, the linen cupboard filled and the kitchen ready. Add some toys, books and flowers on the dining table and a new home awaits a family's arrival.

This pastoral commitment from St Francis of Assisi has meant 20+ families have been supported (well over 90 adults and children) in starting new lives.

Thank you to everyone for your help and prayers. More families are coming (as available housing allows) so there will be further opportunities to turn a house into a welcoming home.

Paul Alford paulalsford@gmail.com 021 02493712

PASSIONIST FAMILY GROUPS, ST FRANCIS OF OHARIU

Background:

Passionist Family Groups have been operating in Sts Peter & Pauls faith community for 28 years and were set up by the Passionist Fathers from Australia with the aim of building community and "living as the early Christians". Parish Co-ordinators are John & Kerry Kleinsman.

Group co-ordinators are: Brian and Christine Hill, Richard and Rebecca Huddleston, Mary and Jenny Spiers, Mark Westebeke and Jenny Stove.

In 2015, Newlands set up two family groups. This group has more recently merged into one large group.

Overall, there are five groups that meet within Sts Peter & Pauls and Newlands communities. St Bens Family Groups have chosen to retain their separate identity.

On Saturday 11 May there was a gathering of young families interested in setting up a new group – building up this group is ongoing.

The AIMS & GOALS of the Passionist Family Group Movement are:

- To share our Christian life together
- To support each other in times of need, and celebration
- To give example to, and involve our children in our Christian sharing
- To live and love like the early Christians – "See how they love one another"
- To build and promote community spirit within the parish

The co-ordinators have met twice in 2019, with an emphasis on living out the Family Group charism in a changing church environment in which there is a greater expectation that lay people will minister to each other. The whole ethos of Passionist Family Groups is well suited to this new and emerging church. On Saturday 4 May Family Group Coordinators and others from our parish attended the annual formation day led by Fr Brian Traynor, CP, from Australia. The theme was "Belonging and Teams". We were well represented at this regional formation day. As parish coordinators we stay in touch with the regional team and recently met with the national Co-ordinators, John and Mary-Ellen Leen.

Members support one another in ways that are not always evident, and the social gatherings are the vehicle for building community. We believe that the groups are in good heart, meeting every 4-6 weeks.

The birthday of Family Groups in our parish is in October and the last co-ordinators' meeting decided that, with all that is going on in the parish, we would celebrate this annual early in the new year.

John & Kerry Kleinsman Kleinsklan88@gmail.com 027 8467489