

St Francis of Assisi Ohariu Parish Position Paper August 2018

This document and questionnaire should be studied in connection with an earlier document entitled *FOR THE INFORMATION OF ALL OHARIU PARISHIONERS*.

This was attached to the Parish Newsletter 12 August along with the fundraising proposal of St Andrew's Church Committee.

Both documents together with the full Newlands presentation may be found online at www.stfrancisohariu.nz

Paper copies are also available in church foyers.

Please return completed questionnaires in a sealed envelope placed in the collection basket at Mass, marked **CONFIDENTIAL TO THE PARISH PRIEST.**

Father Peter Fitzgibbon

ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI OHARIU PARISH

What you need to know about the Parish and its assets

Prior to the Parish Merger

St Andrew's Parish, Newlands

- The St Andrew's Church was built during 1976.
- Original parishioners confirm the roof leaked from opening of church.
- Between 1991 and 2006 repairs & improvements of \$110,000 were being undertaken or proposed.
- During 2015 St Andrew's Parish was unable to meet operational costs and Sts Peter & Paul Parish Account was called on to assist.

St Benedict's Parish, Khandallah

- St Benedict's Church was built during 1965
- St John's Church, Ngaio was closed during 2012, and people from Ngaio & Crofton Downs joined with St Benedict's at Khandallah.
- Major seismic strengthening, alterations and refurbishment work were then undertaken at St Benedict's Church
- An enduring relationship with St Benedict's School.

Sts Peter & Paul's Parish, Johnsonville

- Sts Peter & Paul's Church had major alterations in 1974.
- During 2012, the church, hall, presbytery and parish office were strengthened to meet new seismic building standards.
- The Parish at that time had some \$100,000 in cash
- Mortgage finance of another \$300,000 to meet the cost of strengthening the buildings was obtained through the Wellington Archdiocese.
- A fundraising plan based around \$5-00 per week was successfully initiated during May 2013.
- An enduring relationship with St Brigid's School with St Andrew's Parish associated.

Following the Parish Merger

Given the condition of the various parish buildings, the Parish Finance Committee commissioned a small experienced group to complete a Building Maintenance Report of parish buildings located at Newlands, Khandallah and Johnsonville based upon visual inspections.

The completed report identified work required to be undertaken and an estimate of costs (2017).

In summary:

Newlands

- Both the Presbytery and Church buildings require significant expenditure and both buildings have elements of health and safety risks. The estimated building maintenance costs identified for both buildings is **\$693,292-66**

Khandallah

- Both the Presbytery and Church buildings require significant expenditure and both buildings have elements of health and safety risks. The estimated building maintenance costs for both buildings is **\$382,496-85**

Johnsonville.

- The Church & Hall and Parish Office & Presbytery buildings are generally in good repair and functioning well given the upgrades made to date. However, some additional work is still required. The estimated building maintenance costs identified for both buildings is **\$91,383-60**

Total maintenance cost for the three locations **\$1,167,173-11**

Peer Review

The Parish Finance Committee sought to test the cost conclusions contained in the Building Maintenance Report and wisely had the report peer reviewed. The Peer Reviewer contended that the cost estimates were too light and should be increased by 10%. This increased the total cost estimate to **\$1,283,890-42**

What is the current financial position of the Parish?

During the past two financial years, the financial position of the St Francis of Assisi Ohariu Parish has been extremely tight.

- A few months ago, the worsening financial position prompted the Finance Committee to appeal to Parishioners to increase their weekly contributions to the Parish by \$2-00.
- The positive response eased the position and while a balanced budget of \$382,800-00 has been produced, it has come at the expense of several items of expenditure required at the respective buildings being deferred.
- There is no savings reserve.
- There is a mortgage debt of some \$60,000-00 which is being reduced by special extra contributions from the Johnsonville community.

The Parish Mortgage

During 2013, Sts Peter & Paul's Parish was faced with the need to seismic strengthen the Church, Hall and Presbytery to achieve an acceptable level of safety for both parishioners and the public likely to use the buildings.

- A mortgage up to \$300,000 was negotiated with the Archdiocese.
- Sts Peter & Paul parishioners were encouraged to participate in a special fund-raising scheme by contributing \$5-00 per week.
- This cornerstone scheme has been remarkably successful. Since May 2013, over \$270,000 has been collected. The parish mortgage has progressively reduced to \$60,000-00.
- The Sts Peter & Paul's community continues to service the mortgage debt repayment to the Archdiocese.
- Despite the scheme's success, the mortgage is not expected to be eliminated before May 2022. Contributions have slowed and progressively declined. For the May month in 2014 \$4,616..... in 2015 \$3,676..... in 2016 \$2,533.....in 2017 \$1,864..... in 2018 \$1,756.
- In other words, dealing to a mortgage, while possible, is no easy task.

Availability of Further Mortgage Finance

Whatever parishioners may decide is the best way forward for the overall future of the Parish, the critical component is finance.

- In the past, the Parish has obtained loan finance from the only permitted lender, the Archdiocese of Wellington Catholic Development Fund.
- The possibility of successfully obtaining further finance from the Archdiocese, if the Parish did not consider it unthinkable, would place the Parish in competition with parishes having similar issues, not to forget the issue the whole Archdiocese now faces with the closure of our Cathedral.
- The possibility of successfully obtaining additional finance from the Archdiocese is a question many parishes will ponder.
- The first response of the Archdiocese would be to ask for a sustainable repayment plan.
- Parishes could also be required to ask their parishioners whether they can consider liquidating some of their parish assets?

Capital Values

27 Trebann Street, Paparangi	\$2,570,000
3 Everest Street, Khandallah	\$2,320,000
27 Dr Taylor Terrace, Johnsonville	\$630,000
29 Dr Taylor Terrace, Johnsonville	\$2,410,000

Questions

Going forward operationally, and with so much deferred maintenance, the current financial position is almost certainly unsustainable.

- It is also questionable if incurring further debt is financially prudent.
- In summary, the Parish is asset rich but cash poor which begs the question as to how the position can best be reversed.

Where do people live?

- The population of Wellington's northern suburbs has been growing for several decades and continues to grow.
- Growth is lateral, especially northwards.
- Growth is also central with infill developments and apartment blocks in Johnsonville.

How many people come to Church?

- While the population continues to grow, the numbers of parishioners attending Mass has continued to decline and to reflect the current position across New Zealand.
- The following average weekly statistics taken during November aptly illustrate the position of the three church communities

	1985	2009	2013	2016
Newlands	448	321	275	224
Khandallah	661	342	241	197
Johnsonville	717	784	697	595
Total	1826	1447	1213	1016

- Given the continuing decline in the number of parishioners attending Mass, does the Parish require three churches?

Points for consideration

St Andrew's

- This is the largest site of the three churches.
- The church committee strongly supports the retention of St Andrew's Church.
- Like each of the three churches, the numbers attending Mass continue to decline.
- The estimated building maintenance cost for both the church and presbytery is **\$693,292-66**

St Benedict's

- The church and presbytery are the newest buildings within the Parish but positioned on a limited site.
- There is a well-established respect for the facility.
- The parish school relies upon St Benedict's Church for its pastoral services.
- As with the other two churches, Mass attendances continue to decline.
- The estimated building maintenance cost for both the church and presbytery is **\$382,496-85**

Sts Peter & Paul's

- The church has been servicing the spiritual needs of the Johnsonville and wider area for over 100 years.
- There is a strong bond between parishioners and church as evidenced by the outstanding financial generosity demonstrated over the years.
- The size of the site falls between those of St Andrew's and of St Benedict's, but the site is not being utilised to its potential.
- St Brigid's School receives pastoral services from the church and its facilities.
- The site also has the potential for further development to provide additional facilities for St Brigid's School.
- The estimated building maintenance cost for both the church and presbytery/office is **\$91,383-60**

The Schools

Parishes and Schools work best when they support each other. St Brigid's and St Benedict's Schools are a legacy to the Parish of older parishioners, including grandparents, many of whom are still contributing to the Parish and its life. The schools are reaching full capacity, 340 at St Brigid's and 300 at St Benedict's, with some parish children being enrolled in surrounding Catholic schools.

- Parents support these and other Catholic Schools and Colleges.
- Their primary gift to the church is their children, to outfit them, see them transported, pay compulsory attendance dues, make voluntary donations and assist with school fundraisers.
- Many parents still manage to gift towards parish collections.
- St Brigid's School and St Benedict's School are within walking distance of the churches at Johnsonville and Khandallah respectively.

Consultation with Parishioners

During 2017 the Parish engaged in strategic planning of its buildings stock. The purpose was that when time comes for a building project the results of such planning would be available as a living document, to help in discerning the way forward.

- In April 2018 St Andrew's Church Committee presented a project to repair in stages and preserve St Andrew's Church.
- The specifics of this project and of alternative options must now be considered by the whole Ohariu Parish.
- There should be a full and complete dialogue with all the parish, as required by the Archdiocese.
- All the facts must be laid out clearly to the three communities within the parish.
- This is a process that cannot be rushed and must be done well.

YOU ARE INVITED TO COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONNAIRE AND PLACE IT IN THE COLLECTION BASKET AT CHURCH

What is your Opinion

Please tick your preferences

How many churches should the Parish have? 3 or 2 or 1

If you chose to reduce from three, which should close?

St Andrew's Newlands

St Benedict's Khandallah

St Peter and Paul's Johnsonville

If you chose closure, would you support the provision of some alternative facility such as a chapel to serve the local community? Yes No

To protect the future viability of the parish, would you support the sale of parish assets? Yes No

Yes, I know about the project proposal to repair and retain the Newlands Church

Yes, I am aware of the matters raised in the document entitled *St Francis of Assisi Ohariu Parish Position Paper August 2018*

My name is/our names are:

Residential address:

Phone number:

Email address:

Thank you for carefully reading this information and for completing the questionnaire which may be returned in a sealed envelope placed in the collection basket at Mass, marked CONFIDENTIAL TO THE PARISH PRIEST