

Funding the Pastoral Centre

Mark Daly

One of the functions of the Pastoral Centre Management Committee is to ensure the Centre is run at a small profit and is not a burden on the Church. We are responsible for the day to day and month to month running of the Centre, for the benefit of the Parish and the wider community. We must also look into the future and ensure we have sufficient funds to cover planned and unforeseen improvements and renewals. We are not responsible for the monthly repayments on the building. The Parish Finance Committee looks after this debt.

However, after four years we have accumulated a small surplus, and we were very happy to make a donation to the Parish by means of a cheque for €25,000, which was put towards the mortgage repayments. This has been made possible by good management and by having a very busy Centre. It is also thanks to having so many excellent volunteers, without whom we would not be able to function so successfully. The input of the whole Parish has made our Pastoral Centre a welcoming place for so many people of all ages.

Ní neart go chur le chéile

Maeve Carrick

In April the Pastoral Centre celebrated four years in operation and what changes those four years have brought!

Having started 6 months after the opening, I have seen a lot of those changes. Long gone are the days of looking for something to do. Now each day is full to the brim with the centre attracting users from 9am to 10pm almost every day.

The centre opened with some of the clients from the old community centre helping to fill the rooms. Back after a year's absence were the bridge clubs, the scouts and many of our community groups. Bridge now runs 3 times a week with 2 evening sessions and one morning session. The scouts fill the centre with young voices on Thursday evenings. Young ones are now accommodated in the lovely Stepping Stones Play-school run by sisters Yvonne and Lynda Clarke. This has brought new life to the centre and compliments the new Kindermusik classes which take place three times a week.

The rent paid by our numerous groups has greatly assisted in funding the improvements that have been made to the centre since it opened. With the aid of Pádraig Laffan we installed a hearing aid loop system in September 2012. A TV monitor has also been installed in Tír na nÓg (which means that our play-school students can have ipad experience!). Furthermore, a new handrail was added on the steps both outside and inside. The monies also go towards the many repairs and renewals that go with the running of such a busy centre. This includes a total repainting of the whole centre every two years!

"Grown Up" parishioners can avail of the many activities run by the Active Retirement Association. This group meet in the centre for bowling and group activities as well as organising outside activities such as day trips, walks and even holidays. Voluntary groups such as the Wednesday Social Club and the Alzheimer's support group are further valuable assets to those who can avail of their services.

These are only a few of the many groups run by volunteers without whose valuable services we would be unable to operate. They are priceless members of our community who assist with serving in the coffee dock, manning the desk and setting up rooms. Through them, many friendships have been formed and new connections forged. There is a real sense of "one big family" and I love the fun and camaraderie that we share, not to mention the advice on bringing up teenagers and the new diet that really works!

Along with voluntary groups, the centre has also been put to great use raising funds for various local charities, the Laura Lynn Hospice being the main beneficiary receiving over €100,000 in the last few years through the admirable work of the Foxrock Youth Club. Local schools and groups have run both cake and craft sales with money being used for charity work in Africa, India and South America. The Foxrock Fling supporting the Pastoral Centre debt has provided a fun and community building event. In all since the rebuild, through your generous support, the centre has been used to raise over €150,000, a fantastic achievement in these difficult times and you should all be very proud of what we have accomplished together.

In recent months the Parish Maintenance Team, in the interests of Health and Safety, has been considering ways and means of making the car park and surrounding environs as safe as possible for all users of the facilities. Entering and exiting the car park has been a problem for many years, especially before and after the Sunday masses.

A new pedestrian entrance has been cut in the boundary wall on Kill Lane and this has greatly eased the problem of pedestrians trying to squeeze past cars exiting and entering the main entrance. We have also now provided an official walkway leading from the new pedestrian entrance to the Pastoral Centre and on to the church. We would appeal to all pedestrians to avail of this walkway, remembering that pedestrians have right-of-way when walking on it.

Another problem area is the centre section of the upper car park (dubbed Angina Hill by Fr. Ciarán), where three or four cars frequently park down the

Alzheimer Society of Ireland Social Club

The Alzheimer Society's Foxrock Social Club commenced in October 2013. Our Social Clubs are for people with dementia, their friends, families or carers. We meet once every Tuesday afternoon from 2.30-4.30 in the Parochial Centre in Foxrock Parish Church. The Club is a free, social gathering where people can drop in to chat, access information and support, to meet other people as well as to exchange ideas and experiences. In the future the club aim to plan activities, organise outings and provide an informal, flexible and fun opportunity for people with dementia and their carer or family member to meet others in a supported environment.

Dedicated members of our staff and volunteers support each club meeting and facilitate the needs of the group.

A Week of Prayer

I would like to thank the Management Committee of the Pastoral Centre for their help and support for this year's Week of Guided Prayer. Their decision to extend the availability of the facilities in the Centre made it an even greater success than it was last year.

Seven prayer guides were working in the parish from the 3rd to the 9th of March, with one guide in the Centre in the mornings and four in the afternoons. The remaining two guides worked in the Parochial House. All the guides commented on the warmth of the welcome and the ambience of the Centre (including Maeve Carrick's beautiful flowers). They also commented on the variety of groups coming and going through the

middle, thus obstructing cars trying to move out from either side. The yellow stripes which have just been applied indicate that this is a **No Parking Area**.

At the opposite side of the church, posts and chains have been erected to indicate a No Parking throughway. This throughway is needed to enable cars with disabled drivers or passengers to access their designated parking area alongside the church wall. It must also be kept clear to enable an ambulance to get through and for funeral and wedding cars and other drivers to be able to turn.

Unfortunately a number of drivers park on existing grids and double yellow lines. This practice is a danger to other users and we would request that those responsible please refrain from causing this obstruction.

We appreciate that the car park can be over-filled, especially on days of large funerals, but we appeal to everyone to observe the rules and restrictions on car parking in the interest of the safety of all.

Please feel free to contact Orla on 086-6079630 should you require further information.



Orla and Des who run the Tuesday afternoon Alzheimer's support group

Maeve Davidson

week, in particular the number of young parents and they felt very uplifted and supported in their own faith. There were twenty eight participants who engaged in one to one guidance. Over thirty parishioners volunteered to make tea and coffee and to chat with the participants. They also accompanied the Blessed Sacrament in St Patrick's Room each evening. All of them had a very positive experience.

I greatly appreciate the facilitation of the Centre in providing what we know was a life changing experience for at least three of our participants and a precious time for them all. I am sure the entire parish will reap the benefit of that in time to come.

A Transitional Experience

My name is Cian Fahy and I am a Transition Year student in Gonzaga College. As part of my course this year, I was looking forward to my week's work experience in April in Foxrock Pastoral Centre.

I began each morning in the Pastoral Centre helping out by setting up the coffee shop with the help of Maeve Carrick. While doing this, I was surprised by the many and varied purposes to which the centre is put. These included yoga, pilates and bridge just to name a few. It is such a valuable resource and used by many different community groups.

After the coffee shop had been set up for the crowd about to come out of their classes, I headed over to the

Church Office to help out there with the guidance of Maeve Davidson. I learned many things while helping in the office. One thing is how busy it can get with phones ringing and people coming in through the door, looking to book weddings, funerals and baptisms. I also got to visit my old school with Maeve to prepare the boys for their confirmation.

I met some great people during my week there and I really appreciate the work that they do. I would especially like to thank Maeve Carrick and Maeve Davidson for making my week enjoyable and possible. It's an experience I would definitely recommend to future Transition Year students.

Cian Fahy



Cian Fahy. Transition Year student, Gonzaga

Upathon update!

We all met in the Parish Pastoral Centre on a recent Friday night to present our Upathon cheque to Sarah Meagher of the LauraLynn House.

Hopefully you all remember the Upathon: that was when, last October, with the help of six thousand balloons and the whole of Foxrock Parish we lifted three buildings into the sky in aid of the LauraLynn House –and with your great support and assistance we raised the fabulous amount of €43,000.

But that Friday night was not just about the cheque: it was also about a seventeen month old little boy named Leo who is but one of the patients whose lives has been utterly changed by LauraLynn House.

John McWade, Leo's Father, spoke to us about how his seventeen month old son was alive today because of LauraLynn House.

When Leo was born he was diagnosed with a life-limiting illness. Leo's parents were told that he

would only live for about two weeks. LauraLynn House took Leo in and seventeen months later he has progressed to such a stage that he can now live at home with his parents for part of each week. But Leo will not get any better; his illness will take him soon. And after Joe's incredible portrayal of Leo's survival to date, in spite of all the odds, we will all remember and recognise the great and selfless

work of the staff, nurses and doctors of LauraLynn House.. That Friday night we came away with the story of Leo's incredible fight for life on our minds but also with a fresh determination to do another "athon" next year to continue to raise money for that wonderful and inspiring "home from home" on our own doorstep, LauraLynn House.



Printing Sponsored by St Mel's, Longford

You will remember the fire that devastated St Mel's Cathedral, Longford, on Christmas Day 2009. Major rebuilding is now underway, and among the projects being planned is a Pastoral Centre



adjacent to the Cathedral. In planning this, members of the parish visited our Centre on a few occasions, and two members of our committee travelled to Longford to make a presentation to interested parties in their parish.

These exchanges between parishes are regular when

plans are underway for building Pastoral Centres. When ours was being built, we got great advice and help from Johnstown, Glashule and Crumlin Centres. In turn, since we opened, we have been approached for advice from other parishes which are contemplating their own Centres. Longford was the most recent of these.

In appreciation for our visit to Longford, we were sent a cheque which was both unexpected and appreciated. We decided to put the money to a specific use, and hence Longford has sponsored the printing of this edition of "CentrePoint". Have a look at their parish website, www.longfordparish.com to see photos of the rebuilding of the cathedral, and if you feel in the mood, you could send them a couple of euros to help.

Retiring Editor

For the last three years Ben Codd has edited "CentrePoint", along with looking after four small children. This explains why e-mails flying from Ben's computer usually came after midnight, especially as deadline day drew close. She always managed to get everything done on time, often cajoling contributors up to the last minute, yet always in a gentle, positive way. All editions of "CentrePoint" have arrived on time and full of interesting articles.

Ben is leaving our committee after the summer. I would like to thank her for all the late nights she has put into producing editions of "CentrePoint" and also for her contributions to the Pastoral Centre through her time on the building committee and then on the management committee. I wish Ben all the best in her "retirement", if you call her and Andrew looking after four young ones, "retirement".

Dates for your Diary

June 8th – 9th	Parish Art Exhibition
June 16th	Golf Classic
June 18th	Girls' School Graduation
June 25th	Boys' School Graduation

Summer Closing/ Opening Dates

The centre will close for the summer break on **Friday 28th June** and will reopen on **Monday 2nd September**. During this time enquiries can be made by contacting the manager on 087 149 3598 or by email on foxrockppc@gmail.com.

May we take this opportunity to wish all our volunteers and clients a very happy and safe summer. We look forward to welcoming you all back in September.

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www.parishcentre.ie