

## A note from the Parish Pastoral Council.....

At the Parish Pastoral Council Meeting on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> October, Fr Gerry invited the Council to discuss ways to assist our community to prepare 'A Parish Apology' for the church's actions, indifference and ignorance in child abuse. Members expressed their sadness, sorrow, disbelief, shame and anger as we contemplated the devastating effects of abuse of children in the Catholic Church over the years. Our responses were as varied as we are, and naturally shaped by our own experiences. As we searched for the best way forward, we concluded that a Parish Apology is one step in a process that will take time for 'forgiveness is a process that takes time'.

We are committed to action, mindful that any decision needs to come from the whole community. So we humbly seek the wisdom of the community to discern the most compassionate and practical response from our parish.

Some ideas to consider:

- What form of a Parish Apology, prepared in consultation with and approved by our community would be the most appropriate and effective?
- Our candle - a symbol of 'Light and Hope' - should continue to burn on the Altar at each of our celebrations. This Candle was first lit at *the 'Liturgy of Lament and Repentance for the sexual abuse of children by priests and religious'* held in Lent 2013.
- A Perpetual Day of Remembrance be held on the First Sunday of Lent.
- A permanent memorial be placed in the church or surrounds.
- We find ways to support those hurting, to rebuild the trust and renew the hope.

We appeal to each individual and any groups in the parish to pray for guidance from the Holy Spirit, to consult with one another and then to share your ideas with the Council, either directly through a member or emailing a response to the Parish Office, marked 'Attention Parish Pastoral Council'.

We are genuine in our commitment and encourage open and honest feedback. If you would like to remain anonymous, your response could be mailed to the Parish Office or placed in a designated Parish Pastoral Council box which will be placed under the Council's photos on the back wall. Your responses would be appreciated by Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> November.

Thank you in anticipation of your response,

*Fr Gerry and the Parish Pastoral Council.*

*Matt Ritchie, Tom Gordon, Sam Turner, Vicki Stephensen, David Grugeon, Jolly Sebastian, Kareem Patros, Kathryn Turner, Kevin Ryan, Damian Riggall, Margaret Halpin, Gary Creevey.*