

## CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY BUTTERWORTH

Parish Assembly 2022, held on 27/03/2022, 4.00 p.m. (via Zoom)

Participation : 66 parishioners

Opening Prayer : Winson

Word of God : Fr. Dominic

No	DISCUSSION
1.	<p>Review of 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Acceptance : of the pandemic and the new way of life</li> <li>b) Uncertainties : open/close of church and the country's SOPs kept changing</li> <li>c) Vaccination : achieving herd immunity</li> <li>d) Church : remained active with a mixture of virtual activities and physical events</li> <li>e) video on activities held during 2021 was presented</li> <li>f) Milestones : (i) completion of Nativity centre, renovation and re-dedication of NBVM (ii) resumption of catechism classes via online platform (iii) mass in honour of 10 recipients of Exemplary Service Award (iv) publication of NBVM/SCIC 86/26 souvenir magazine (v) installation of William Henry as Acolyte</li> </ul>
2.	<p>2022 Expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Year of the Bible (Listening to The Word)</li> <li>b) Gradual return to physical activities ('hybrid' model)</li> <li>c) Restore, renew and rebuild</li> <li>d) Parish Ministry elections</li> <li>e) Education Centre initiative – to help slow learners</li> </ul>
3.	<p>Updates from Fr. Dominic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Reshared the Vision, Mission &amp; Slogan for NBVM/SCIC            Vision : Christ Centred Magnetic Community of Peace, Love &amp; Hope            Mission : (1) Unity                          (2) To be a Welcoming Parish                          (3) Word of God                          (4) Family (how to keep the family united &amp; to create a 'family-like' church environment of love, trust &amp; mutual respect                          (5) Participatory (community that will enthusiastically come forward to participate in activities &amp; serve in church organizations)            Slogan : My Church My Home</li> <li>b) Focus for 2022 : Year of the Bible (Listening to the Word)           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ad Intra { - Worship (Eucharist celebration, sacraments, adoration, novena, rosary, feast days)</li> <li>              - Growth (bible formation, strengthen youth, activate Ministries and BECs)</li> <li>              - Special Concern (Project Kasih-help others, care for the sick and elderly)</li> <li>              - Pastoral (listening parish, nurture leaders, Nativity centre to be operational)</li> <li>Ad Extra { - Evangelization (RCIA)</li> <li>              - Dialogue through friendship</li> </ul> </li> <li>c) Regular activities : Ad Intra – Angelus/Word sharing (Tuesdays), adorations (Wednesdays &amp; Thursdays, novena (Saturdays), Legion of Mary, catechism classes, masses, rosary</li> </ul>

Ad Extra – Angelus (Wednesdays), adoration (Thursdays), evangelization (RCIA classes), dialogue, Catholic Entrepreneurs, formations (bible, visiting priests-preaching)

- d) Parish has taken over the administration of SSVP families. The monthly SSVP collection is not enough, therefore funds from Project Kasih is also used for this purpose.
- e) Youth Ministry – Tamil youth group already have their vision/mission and leaders. They will interchange the leaders on a bi-monthly basis
  - Mandarin youth group – doing ok
  - English youth group – not active
  - Fr. Dominic is planning to have an activity on Youth Day
- f) Ministries – Fr. Dominic will meet the various ministries
  - Fr. Dominic plans to meet the BECs (Jun – Aug). Propose to have BEC activities, e.g. adoration, mass coordination, fellowship in church
- g) 3 years plan – 2022 : Bible (To know God)  
2023 : Prayer (To be with God)  
2024 : Communion (To serve God)

4. Synod Questionnaire

- a) 99 parishioners responded to the questionnaire (about 6% of the total parish population age 12 years and above)
- b) 72% responded that we are doing well whereas 28% responded that we are not doing well
- c) There were several inputs for future improvement, e.g. dialogue with other denominations, to encourage ‘passive’ parishioners to play a prominent role, organize ecumenical celebrations, leaders to change their attitude, go back to church traditions, Diocese to have centre for those suffering from depression/mental for cheaper consultation, etc.

5. Finance

- a) 2021 – income RM468,609
  - expenses RM390,164
  - surplus RM78,445
- b) 2022 – projected income RM450,000
  - projected expenses

6. Liturgical

- a) Activities for 2022
  - i. The disposition of the right attitude towards our service to God and one another – Liturgical family and all ministries – end of 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter
  - ii. A Biblical and fascinating tour of the mass – for all parishioners – 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter
  - iii. A day of fellowship and a night of prayer with the Lord – Liturgical family – 4<sup>th</sup> quarter
- b) Liturgical team is calling out for volunteers especially organist/musicians and singers

7. Catechetical

- a) Online catechism classes have commenced for Standards 1 to Form 4
- b) Plans to have a post confirmation camp (TBA)
- c) English : i) primary physical camp – year end
  - ii) Secondary physical camp – year end
  - iii) Retreat for catechism teachers (TBA)
  - iv) weekly formation on Symbolom i.e. the Catholic faith explained to catechism teachers
  - v) physical classes will start soon
- d) Tamil : i) to have formations (TBA)
  - ii) students camp (TBA)
  - iii) year end concert

8.	<p>v) physical classes will start soon</p> <p>e) Mandarin : i) focus on physical classes</p> <p>BEC</p> <p>a) 2022 Plans</p> <p>i) Stage 1 : Reunion (community to start coming together in small numbers)  - proposed 18/4/2022 onwards (once a month)  - start small e.g. pray the rosary</p> <p>ii) Stage 2 : Eat together (community to have a meal together, spend 60 minutes)  - propose May/June  - plan a community gathering e.g. short prayer/bible passage and pot bless</p> <p>iii) Stage 3 : Celebrate together (communities coming together in church)  - September (Feast days)  - a parish of community e.g. praise &amp; worship, singalong, short presentation</p> <p>b) Recommendation  Who is new to the parish? Register new families /individuals  - welcoming and inviting new faithful to Butterworth/Prai parishes  - weekly announcement – commentator to welcome new faithful to the parish and invite them to meet staff of the office</p>
9.	<p>Organization/Ministry Election</p> <p>a) Stephen Chin quoted on Acts 1:21-26 where it reflects on serving, being nominated  - Reflection : Am I ready, Am I worthy, Am I able, Do I have the time?  If the answers are “yes” → review your intention  If the answers are “no” → Do not be afraid – Trust in the Lord and offer your services</p> <p>b) Election process :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• pray for God’s inspiration and direction</li> <li>• surrender to the Lord</li> <li>• trust in the Lord</li> </ul> <p>i) fix a date for election (to be witnessed by any PAT member)  ii) elect – chairperson, deputy chairperson, secretary, treasurer, core team  iii) outgoing chairperson may act as advisor to the team (optional)</p> <p>c) Post election :</p> <p>i) New leader – serve with love, humiliation and patience  ii) turn to the Lord for guidance  iii) do not be afraid to seek guidance and help  iv) team members to give full support to new leader</p> <p>d) Reminder to all leaders – try not to stay in the position for too long, learn to let go and move on, encourage and support the next generation of leaders, volunteer for other ministries/organizations/projects</p>
10.	<p>Q &amp; A / Other matters</p> <p>a) Meeting with Fr. Dominic on Tuesdays. Parishioners can also meet with any visiting priest (make an appointment)</p> <p>b) SSVP – to recruit young members. BEC leaders to notify their members. To publish in website and bulletin</p> <p>c) Responses to Fr. Dominic’s question if we are a ‘dying’ parish :</p> <p>i) probably due to the pandemic  ii) restarting slowly  iii) pandemic, need to ‘encourage’ and ‘reassure’ the people</p>

	<p>iv) cannot wait for leaders to come forward, should approach them. Church of Divine Mercy is vibrant, maybe we don't have the right group to be innovative (put the right people)</p> <p>v) give opportunities to a person but don't judge</p> <p>vi) people are in a comfort zone, since others are doing the job so they don't come forward</p> <p>vii) what is the parish doing to encourage the younger ones to step up  <b>→ Stephen responded that we should encourage the younger generation to join ministries, give them leadership trainings/formations</b></p> <p>viii) we have to accept the fact that the young ones leave to other states for better opportunities (Butterworth as a township has "stagnated", new townships and industrial estates are being developed at other district, for example Batu Kawan, etc)</p> <p>ix) servers need to be re-activated and to have regular meetings</p> <p>d) Responses to Fr. Dominic's question on a feedback from the Synod question i.e. are we focussing too much on buildings and less on pastoral?</p> <p>i) we need the new nativity building for so many purposes</p> <p>ii) this assumption could be due to the pandemic and people see churches are focussing on buildings, whereas the people are 'suffering' during the pandemic time. During pandemic churches are closed, probably the church is not aware of the struggles of the people. To get proper statistics of the financial status/those in need.  <b>→ Fr. Dominic responded that during the pandemic there were no major fund raising projects directed towards building construction. Instead, the focus was more on Project Kasih whereby funds were disbursed to those in need. The church/Fr. Dominic will not know who are the needy in the BECs, so leaders should play their part and identify them to the church.</b></p> <p>iii) Project Kasih – in what way is assistance given  <b>→ Fr. Dominic responded in the form of cash, ration, studies (allowance to students in universities), medical assistance, funeral assistance, etc.</b></p> <p>iv) there has not been any structural changes in NBVM for so many years and we greatly need the new Nativity centre, i.e. for catechism classes, meetings, etc.  <b>→ Fr. Dominic informed that there should be a balance. We want to do the best for the people. He also informed that those who are interested to assist to come forward</b></p> <p>v) when will all the language catechism and functions be held physically?  <b>→ Fr. Dominic responded that one of the problem is parking space, especially during major activities. This will be resolved once the basement parking is open. (the new building is pending the final stage of obtaining the Certificate of Completion and Compliance)</b></p>
	<p>Assembly ended at 6.50 p.m., with blessing from Fr. Dominic</p>

Recorded by Emily Jessica