

## **Annual General Assembly**

30<sup>th</sup> May 2024, St. John XXIII Parish

### ***Minutes of the Meeting***

The General Assembly for 2024 was convened at 18:30 p.m. and chaired by Mr. Joselito Benitez, Vice-President of the Parish Administrative Council (PAC). The meeting was attended by 21 parishioners/participants as indicated in Annex I (attached). The following officers of the Parish Administrative Council (PAC) were present:

Fr. Paul C. Friel-Parish Priest  
Mr. Joselito Benitez-Vice President  
Mr. Augustine Agyeman Duah-Treasurer  
Ms. Camille Roney-Maison Diocésaine de Genève Liaison  
Ms. Sandra Simpson-Safeguarding  
Mr. William McClain-Human Resources  
Mr. Julien Senderos-Property Management

The following officer of the PAC was absent:  
Mr. Oscar Mbeche -President (Business Trip)

#### **1. Opening Prayer (Fr. Paul, Parish Priest)**

The opening prayer was led by Fr. Paul C. Friel, parish priest. After the prayer, Fr. Paul welcomed the participants of the General Assembly.

#### **2. Welcome and Opening of the General Assembly Approval of Agenda (Joselito Benitez, PAC Vice-President)**

Mr. Benitez, PAC Vice-President, welcomed the participants of the General Assembly, including the PAC officers.

Mr. Benitez informed the participants that the President Oscar Mbeche was unable to preside over the meeting due to work commitments. In line with the parish Statutes, Mr. Benitez as Vice-President of PAC presided over the General Assembly.

He reminded the participants the mission of the parish which is: As the English speaking Roman Catholic Parish of St John XXIII, we come together to share our gifts as a community of diverse nations and cultures. We celebrate and live our faith through prayer and the Sacraments and, service to others, we teach and proclaim the good news of our Risen Lord Jesus Christ and we reach out in solidarity with all people of good will to promote Truth, Justice and Peace.

Mr. Benitez pointed out that the Statute provisions were met for the General Assembly decisions to be valid including: meeting quorum, meeting presided over by the Vice-President of PAC, notice to members of agenda, communication of date and venue 15 days in advance, accounts and budgets made available on the website at least 15 days in advance, and the meeting taking place no later than June 30.

Mr. Benitez then declared the opening of the 2024 General Assembly.

### **3. Approval of Provisional Agenda**

Mr. Benitez stated that the Provisional Agenda was available on the parish website since May 14<sup>th</sup>, in addition to the financial report and budget.

He confirmed that no proposed additions or amendments to the agenda were received in the last 7 workings days.

The General Assembly approved the GA agenda.

### **4. Approval of May 2023 General Assembly Minutes**

The minutes of the General Assembly held on 01 June 2023 were approved by the Assembly without objections nor amendments. (*Minutes GA 2023 have been posted on the parish website*)

### **5. PAC 2023 Report**

Mr. Benitez presented the 2023 Report of the Parish Administrative Council (PAC) which included its accomplishments and activities in 2023. The PAC 2023 Report highlighted the following:

- a) At the end of 2023, the parish had over 3,870 registered parishioners with approximately 1,200-1,750 attending weekend Masses regularly. The parish celebrated over 100 Weddings, Baptisms, Confirmations and First Communion in 2023. The parish calendar had a number of fundraising events to support various outreach activities including the International Street Food Festival, the Goan Sunday, the Filipino Barrio Fiesta, Christmas Sala and the first-ever Multi-Choir Concert.
- b) The parish is committed to teaching catechism to about 265 children with support from 45 volunteer catechists and 10 teenage assistants. Through continual improvement, the Marriage Preparation, Rite of Christian Initiation



- for Adults, catechism and sacramental programs strive to engage children, youth families and adults to seek communion with God and with one another.
- c) The financial and administration controls were fully reviewed and updated in 2021. Human Resources policies were reviewed and updated throughout 2022 and 2023. A full overhaul of the Safeguarding policies and procedures in line with the Eglise Catholique Romaine Genève's (ECR) direction and the laws of the Canton of Geneva. The two-year project to renew the Statutes of the parish and By-Laws in collaboration with the ECR will be finalized by June 2024.
  - d) Essential repairs to the 60+ year old church buildings inside and out continue to be made. The church roof from 1975 at the end of 2023 required substantial reconstruction. The main works were completed by spring of 2024 and the total project cost is estimated to run over CHF 220K.
  - e) Parish contributions and other support are slowly growing year on year since the end of the lock down but have not reached pre-pandemic.
  - f) We have made substantial progress (CHF 192.4K) on the repayment of the renovation loan of CHF 5.2 million. This includes the finalization of both Mission Interior loans.
  - g) In 2024, additional focus will be placed on fundraising opportunities to sustain activities with the necessary resources. We encourage parishioners to consider how they can best support the health of the parish in the future.

The General Assembly noted and approved the PAC Report 2023 by Mr. Benitez (*view full report as well as other PAC reports on our parish website*)

#### **6. Parish Finances 2023 and Auditor's Report (Mr. Augustine Agyeman-Duah, PAC Treasurer and Mr. David Karumba Wanjiru, Independent Auditor)**

Mr. Agyeman-Duah presented the financial report and highlighted the following based on the Financial Statement as of 31 December 2023: The parish is in a good financial position with a surplus of CHF 152,783 before consideration of accounting estimate- amortization of church premises of CHF 189,836. Income has been stable and increased by 8.9% in 2023.

The parish expenditure remains within budget by 3% (CHF 21,000). The liquidity of the parish is good with a cash balance of CHF 587,345 as at 31 December 2023.

The parish continues to meet its financial obligations including the repayment of loans. Payment of CHF 192,470 was made for all the parish loans in 2023. The total amount of loans outstanding is currently CHF 300,000.

Mr. Agyeman-Duah stated that the income from collections and pledges from parishioners which the parish depends on decreased by 8% in 2023. He encouraged the parishioners to continue to support the parish by redeeming their pledges on a timely basis.

Mr. Karumba, an independent auditor, confirmed in his report that the financial statements forwarded by the Treasurer present in all material respects, the financial position of the parish as of December 31, 2023, and the changes in its assets and cash flows for the year ended are represented in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

Following the presentation of the Finance report, a Mr. O’Riordan informed the meeting that he had requested and not received the management letter for 2022.

In response to this, the Treasurer apologized for the oversight and assured the participant that the management letter for 2022 would be sent out to him after the meeting.

The General Assembly noted and approved the parish financial statements of 2023 as audited by the Auditor (*view reports on our parish website*)

It was noted that PAC will nominate a new auditor shortly as the current auditor will not be renewing his term.

#### **7. Budget for 2025 (Mr. Augustine Agyeman-Duah, PAC Treasurer)**

The budget for 2025 for the parish is set at CHF 754,895 an increase in CHF 5,000 for outreach activities. The budget was summarized as follows:

Parish Activity	Budget 2024	Budget 2025
Parish Ministries and Programmes	59,600	60,600
Outreach Programmes	100,000	106,000
Facilities	184,459	184,459
Parish Administration	215,000	215,000
Growing in Faith Initiative	189, 836	189,836
<b>Total Functional Expenses</b>	<b>749,895</b>	<b>754,895</b>

The General Assembly noted and approved the parish budget for 2025.

#### **8. PPC report 2023 (Olga Menang, PPC Head)**

Olga Menang highlighted the mission of the PPC which is to support the parish priest – Fr. Paul, in fostering pastoral activities and advise on various aspects of parish pastoral life. She thanked the former members of PPC for their engagement and valuable contributions towards building a vibrant spirit-filled community of faith.

Ms. Menang emphasized that the main focus this year will be strengthening pastoral programmes and engaging parishioners in pastoral activities, through: increasing



visibility and promoting different ministries and enhancing communication in the parish through different channels such that parishioners are aware of the programmes, services, and pastoral life activities.

Ms. Menang further acknowledged that not all persons have access to the news letter sent out by email every week. As such, other modern channels of communication including whatsapp and Instagram will be used going forward. A flyer featuring all the parish's programmes, ministries and other activities of the parish was distributed in April. A QR code was also created on the flyer providing information about the parish, individuals can also register with the parish and subscribe to the parish newsletter.

#### **9. Report 2023 from Director of Religious Education (Ms. Anna Berkeley, Religious Education Director)**

In her report, Ms. Berkeley pointed out that 2023 was a great year with 266 children enrolled in catechism classes. She confirmed that the 4 to 13-year-old children attend classes on 25 Sunday mornings of the year and the confirmation students, 14 to 16 - year-old children, attend classes twice a month. Ms. Berkeley noted that these classes have been supported by 45 committed volunteer Catechists and 10 teenage assistants.

#### **10. PAC Elections**

Mr. Michael Kavuma was voted unanimously as a PPC delegate to the PAC. The term for the PAC position of Treasurer (Augustine Agyeman Duah) was renewed.

#### **11. Renewal of By-Laws (Camille Roney, Liaison for Maison Diocésaine de Genève)**

In her report, Ms. Roney noted that the last year, the General Assembly approved the modifications that were proposed to the parish Statutes. The Geneva Diocese has been working over several years to update and harmonise the parish Statutes for over 50 parishes under its umbrella.

She noted that with the new Statutes validated by the General Assembly in 2023, the team will proceed with updating the parish By-Laws. The By-Laws accompany and clarify the provisions in the Statutes and give additional detail in the business of conducting the General Assembly and the PAC.

Ms. Roney confirmed that the proposed modifications are minor, and mostly reflect the changes already approved in the new Statutes. She highlighted that the modifications were accepted by the Bishop's representative in Geneva in October 2023.

The General Assembly noted and approved the adoption new By-Laws (view *proposed By Laws on our parish website*)

## 12. Any Other Business / Q & A

A question was raised about the update on the church roof repair. It was explained that 90% of the roof repairs has been done with more work to be completed in the coming months. For anyone interested in the detailed technical aspects of the roof repair, they were encouraged to email the Property Manager directly.

No other questions were raised.

## 13. Conclusion and Closing

Father Paul thanked Auditor David Karumba for his service over the years and wished him good luck with his future endeavors.

He expressed his gratitude to the PAC members for their hard and committed work. Father welcomed Olga Menang the new PPC Head and looked forward to working with her team.

Father thanked the participants for their presence. In closing, Father Paul led the prayer of gratitude for a successful General Assembly meeting. The meeting concluded at 19:30 p.m.

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Maribel Mapanao  
GA Secretary

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Joselito Benitez  
Parish Administrative Council  
Vice- President

## Annex I

**General Assembly**  
30 May 2024, St John XXIII Parish  
**Attendance**

1. Ms. Patricia Jjuuko
2. Ms. Sandra Simpson
3. Mr. Julien Senderos
4. Ms. Anna Berkeley
5. Mr. William McClain
6. Ms. Camille Roney
7. Mr. David Roney
8. Mr. Aidan Roney
9. Ms. Evelyn Benitez
10. Mr. Joselito Benitez
11. Mr. Augustine Agyeman Duah
12. Ms. Jacquie Julen
13. Ms. Vasanthi Saverimuttu
14. Ms. Olga Menang
15. Mr. Robert O’Riordan
16. Ms. Arrigo Klove
17. Ms. Julie Whitford
18. Ms. Maribel Mapanao
19. Ms. Esther Mejorada
20. Ms. Annie Yuson
21. Mr. David Karumba