

ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2019



LUMEN CHRISTI
CATHOLIC PARISHES WOLLONGONG

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Opening Prayer

Bishop: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen

Bishop: Sisters and brothers, peace be with you.

All: And with your spirit.

Introductory Prayer

A Reading from the holy Gospel according to John (8.12-16):

Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." The Pharisees then said to him, "You are bearing witness to yourself; your testimony is not true." Jesus answered, "Even if I do bear witness to myself, my testimony is true, for I know where I have come from and where I am going, but you do not know where I come from or where I am going. You judge according to the flesh, I judge no one. Yet even if I do judge, my judgment is true, for it is not I alone who judge, but I and he who sent me."

Reader: The Gospel of the Lord

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Pause for contemplation of the Gospel

Presider: Let us pray to our Redeemer for our parish communities of the Cathedral, Gwynneville, Fairy Meadow and Balgownie, that God may hear our prayers and guide our thoughts and words.

Reader: That our parish families will be renewed in hope and healed of past wounds. In your kindness:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That our faith communities will adore God with tenderness and share the treasure of our generosity with those in need. In your kindness:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That our families and friends will follow Christ, walking not in darkness but having the light of life. In your kindness:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That we will grow in confidence and bear witness to the truth, the goodness and the beauty of the Gospel. In your kindness:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That the students, parents, teachers and catechists of our parish and state schools will grow in learning, faith and right judgment. In your goodness:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That the deceased members of our parish families who have left us an inheritance of living faith and deeds of loving service will rise with Christ in glory. In your kindness:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Priest: Father of mercies, your Word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. Dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds that this assembly of our parish communities will be guided by your wisdom. We ask this through Jesus, our Lord.

All: Amen.

A Message from the Administrator

Dear Parishioners,

One of the most beautiful experiences for me as a priest is the lighting of the candles on the night of the Easter Vigil. After the Easter fire is blessed outside the Church and the Paschal candle lit Christ is proclaimed as the Light. At the door of the Church the Light of Christ is again proclaimed and slowly each member of the congregation - the parents, the children, the elderly, the happy and the sad – has his or her candle lit from the Paschal Candle. Each one receives his or her own share in the Light of Christ. Then, as you look out through the church you see the combined light of the candles gently illuminating the faces of God's people. Together, we share the Light of Christ who enables us to shine with him in the darkness.

The symbolism of the Paschal Candle and our candles shining in the darkness is ever relevant to our experience of Christian life. We have felt in the past year the pain of separation from those we love, the shameful reminder of our weaknesses, the confusion of not understanding what is happening. At times we have “walked in darkness” and lived “in shadow dark as death” (Isaiah 9.1). The bushfires that have wreaked such devastation for people in various parts of our Diocese and across our Country is a shocking reminder of the fragility of life. Yet, the resilience of those who have been hurt and the generosity of those who have supported them is a timely reminder of how we can be at our best when the challenges of life fall upon us. “The light shines in the darkness” (John 1.5). This light is the whole of Christ's life and teaching, his death and resurrection. We are called to be transparent with this light by a life of “faith working through love” (Galatians 5.6), so that our good works shine before others, inspiring them to glorify God (cf. Matthew 5.16).

This light of Christ shines in our parishes. I want to take this opportunity to thank all those in our communities of faith - St Francis Xavier Cathedral, St John Vianney Fairy Meadow, Mater Dolorosa Balgownie, and St Brigid's Gwynneville – for all the work that has continued over the last year. On behalf of Bishop Brian and Fr Victor I sincerely thank those who serve on our parish staff, help in the preparation of our churches for the Sacred Liturgy, serve during Mass, read the Sacred Scriptures to us, provide beautiful music to help us praise God, take Holy Communion to the Sick, provide morning tea after Mass, collect and count the parish collections, take care of our parish properties, administer and teach in our parish schools, and run Sacramental programmes for our children. We are especially grateful to those who have treated us with kindness and welcomed us into their homes.

We also give our thanks for the financial generosity of our parishioners who have in total contributed \$54,018.10 to Catholic Mission, Caritas, St Vincent de Paul, and the Annual Bishop's Appeal. The annual parish collections in our pastoral region added up to \$257,252. As a sign of the technological times, in May 2019 we embarked on

accepting donations via a donation tap point, where parishioners and visitors are welcome to donate electronically to the Cathedral parish. This has raised \$3,598.00. Donation tap points will be set up at St John Vianney and St Brigid's in the near future.

A special thank you goes to the parishioners who have generously donated towards the Cathedral restoration fund. This fund supported the refurbishment of the Cathedral Bell and the Candle Sticks that adorn the Cathedral sanctuary. A total of \$16,722.10 was raised in 2019 towards these two projects.

An important work of parish life is the maintenance of the buildings in which we gather and worship God, supporting each other to grow in the life of faith and love. In order to ensure the long-term survival of the Cathedral, we need to temporarily close it from September to November this year. To provide a refreshed look to the interior of the Cathedral we propose to repair or replace church flooring, replace the carpet on the sanctuary, refurbish the pews and kneelers, and re-paint the interior of the church. During this time weekday and weekend Masses will be relocated to the neighbouring churches of Fairy Meadow and Gwynneville. Further information will be provided closer to time.

Part of our financial goal is to utilise the valuable inheritance of our land. Our short-term goal is to make short-term parking available to agencies and retailers on the Cathedral site. For the long-term, our Cathedral site Masterplan committee will reconvene over the coming weeks to look into the possibilities of developing the Cathedral site.

There are many works undertaken by our parishioners. One example to be highlighted is that thirty-eight parishioners gathered to engage in Plenary 2020 Discernment from 9 October to 15 November last year. Many recommendations came from these discussions and it will take time for the pastoral council, to be newly appointed this year, to digest them and discern how and whether they will be applied. However, it is clear from the thoughtful way the recommendations were articulated there was great interest in improving the life of our parishes. The recommendations included the desire for greater prayerfulness and spiritual growth, gathering more often in a social context, and reaching out to parents of children in our schools.

In all these recommendations a point that occurs to me is the need for what Pope Francis in his peace message for 1 January 2020 calls "shared responsibility". If I understand Pope Francis correctly, "shared responsibility" requires us to recognise our common origin in God and to proceed by way of mutual respect and trust. It leads each person to make his or her contribution responsibly for the true good of the community. Yet, the phrase evokes a sense not only of suggesting a way forward but of acting together to achieve the goal of trust and peace. Applied to the context of parish life, "shared responsibility" implies a practical commitment to building up both the community of God's people and the relationships that bring us to maturity in Christ.

One of the benefits of having light is that we can see what is in front of us and discern a way forward. In other words, we can exercise our “vision” in the cause of making good decisions. This can be taken as a symbol of understanding the way to act for the good of a person or a community. We can give a “vision” to a group of people when we provide them with an overarching purpose and the way to achieve that purpose. With this common purpose the members of the group can then apply their expertise and energies to achieving more specific goals to attain this purpose. The vision I suggest for our reflections, discussions and actions for 2020, is found in the Book of Isaiah. It is a vision which recognises that with God’s encouragement and consolation we can move forward together as communities of faith, love and service. In Chapter 49, verse 6, Isaiah addresses a people that has known the devastation and confusion of defeat and exile. Into this darkness God reveals a threefold plan of action for his people:

- 1) to restore;
- 2) to bring back;
- 3) to be a light to the nations.

Moreover, God enables the people to become a light so that his salvation may reach the ends of the earth.

The vision, it seems to me, is that all the beauty and all the riches of God’s salvation be given to everyone inasmuch as they are willing and capable of receiving that offer of salvation. The way to attain this vision is to accept the three more specific goals set out in Isaiah and allow them to guide our decisions and personal relationships. To my mind, the threefold goal becomes:

- 1) *To restore*, that is, to heal and renew the people and the personal relationships that have been damaged;
- 2) *To bring back*, that is, to help the people return who, for one reason or another, feel distant from us, loosely connected to us, perhaps angry at us;
- 3) *To be a light*, that is, to witness to Christ by a life of love and generosity for everyone we meet in our families, friendships, workplaces, and associations of recreation.

The underlying aim is that each group of people be helped to come to the fullness of their life as beloved children of God. The question is, though, who are these people and how can we reach out to them? To put the question another way: how can we as the faith communities of St Francis Xavier, St John Vianney, Mater Dolorosa, and St Brigid’s, restore, bring back and be a light to those who are hurt, distant, and in need of a witness to Christ? This question points to a genuine pastoral need - to help others come to the fullness of life in Christ. I leave these thoughts with you and I ask you to join with me in prayerful reflection and sincere discussion to seek the best ways to respond to this pastoral need.

From the Business and Operations Manager

Under the Code of Canon Law (537), each parish is required to organise a Finance Council to assist the parish priest in the canonical administration of the parish's financial and temporal goods.

The membership of the current Cathedral Parish Finance Council is a balance of parishioners from our three parishes with diverse professional backgrounds. The Parish Finance Council meets four times a year to discuss and inform the Administrator on various financial matters that will benefit the financial growth of our three parishes.

The members of the new Parish Finance Council which was appointed in November are:

Fr Bernard Gordon, Administrator
Fr Victor Vincent, Assistant Priest
Kevin Galea, Business and Operations Manager
Gabi Tobin, Chair – Parish Representative
Denis Frew, Deputy Chair – Parish Representative
Lynne Hudson, Parish Representative
Lisa de Paiva, Parish Representative
Dunstan Saverimuttu, Parish Representative

THE LAST FINANCIAL YEAR PARISH INCOME

PARISH COLLECTIONS

What are all the Collections about?

A parish is dependent on the generosity of its parishioners to sustain itself and its many charitable and pastoral works. This support is mainly through the two collections that are taken up during each Sunday Mass.

The First Collection – for the clergy

The first collection provides for a priest's monthly stipend, food and drinks, private health insurance and superannuation contribution – as well as contributing towards the care of priests who have retired. The collection is centralised – after a living allowance has been withdrawn, the remaining balance each month is swept into the Clergy Remuneration Fund.

The Second Collection – for the parish

Planned Giving envelopes and any loose cash donated at this collection are banked into a parish account which is overseen by the Parish Priest/Administrator and Parish Finance Council. Direct debits and direct donations through BPOINT and Tap Donations are also deposited into this Parish Account.

The very many costs of running a parish are deducted from this account. These expenses include:

- parish operating expenses such as insurance, electricity, water, telephone & internet, general maintenance and the upkeep of the church, meeting room, presbytery, car park and church grounds
- parish pastoral programs, such as Scripture in state schools
- parish staff salaries including superannuation
- car expenses for the priest
- a Cathedricum – a contribution of 10% of the second collection (excluding donations) to the Bishop towards the running cost of the Diocese

Audited Reports

At the end of each calendar year, an external auditor reviews the parish accounts. A copy of the Auditor's Report is given to the Diocese, the Parish Finance Council and is published in our churches.

Please Note: We need your contributions especially for the Second Collection. If you wish to be part of the plan giving program or would like to increase your direct deposit, please contact the parish office.

Plan Giving Envelopes

The Envelope Collection is part of the Parishes Plan Giving Programme whereby a family chooses to take a set of envelopes for the year, marked with the date for each week, and decides on an agreed amount they will contribute. Alternatively, a family may set up a Direct Debit either from a credit card or through arranging a monthly scheduled transaction paid into our parish account. The plan giving programme is important as it enables the parish to budget for the coming year depending on the pledge made by parishioners.

Loose Collection

Bundled into the Loose Collection are all monies received via the church's collection plates that are not placed in an envelope.

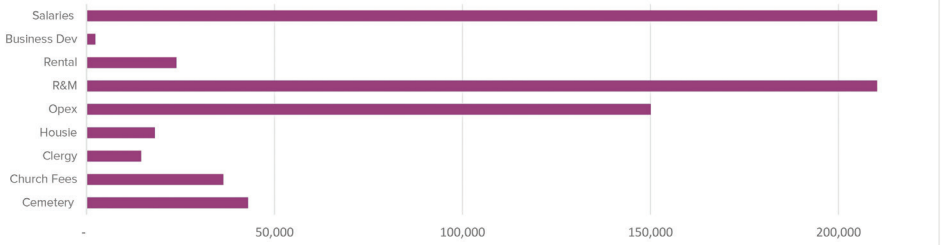
Apart from the *second collection*, we are also fortunate to have four churches, St Francis Xavier Cathedral, St John Vianney Co-Cathedral, Mater Dolorosa Church and St Brigid's Church which generate income for our parishes through weddings and parking bays for long-term agencies and medical practices at St Francis Xavier Cathedral, Wollongong.

Income is also supplemented through fundraising initiatives organised by teachers and parents of St Brigid's School for allocated parking of the Cathedral Parish, which receives 50% of the takings from sporting and special events in the Wollongong CDB.

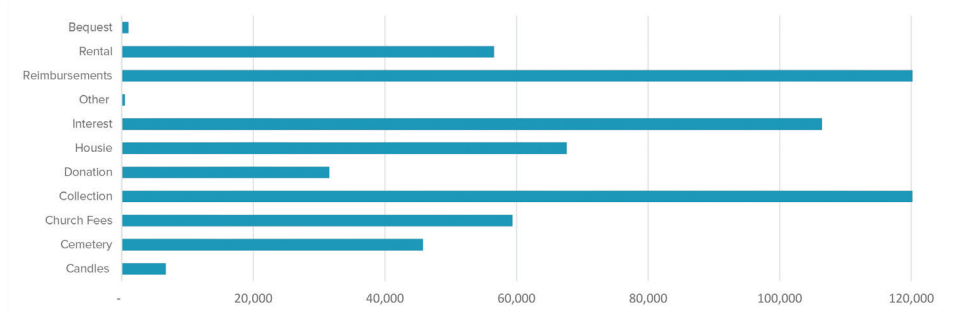
Finance Reports

Cathedral Parish

SFX Expenses 2019

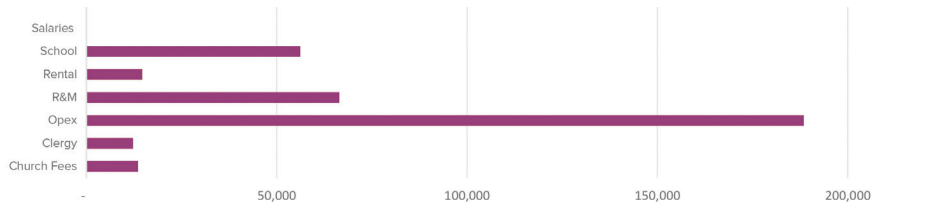


SFX Income 2019



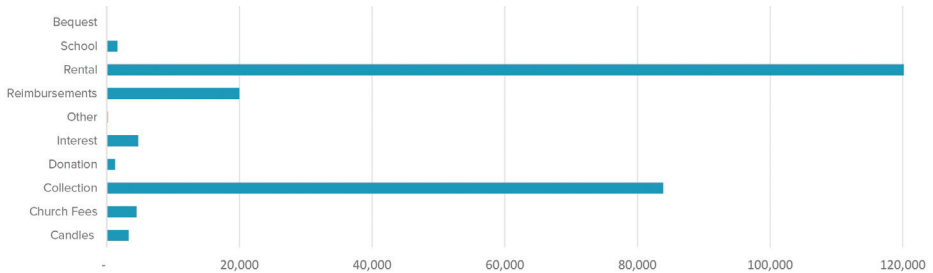
Fairy Meadow Parish & Balgownie Church

SJV/MDB Expenses 2019



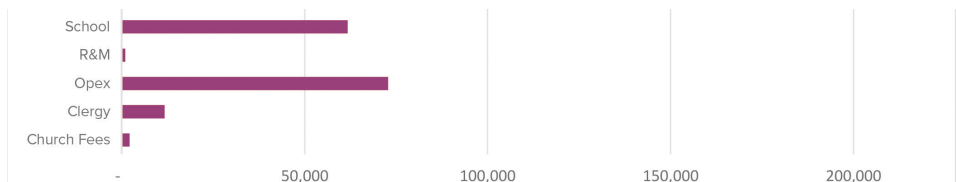


SJV/MDB Income 2019

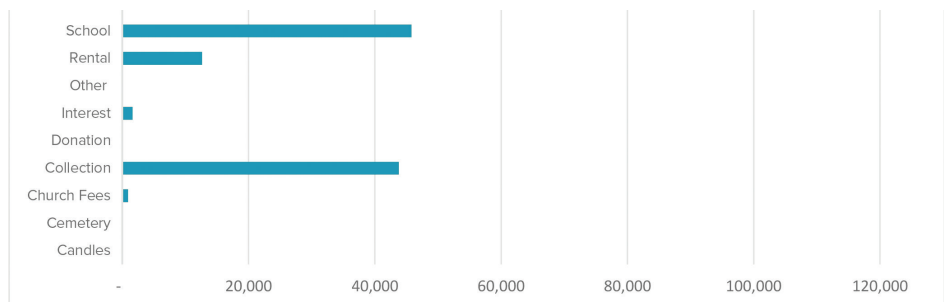


Gwynneville Parish

SBG Expenses 2019



SBG Income 2019



EXPENSES

Maintenance of all precinct buildings (St Francis Xavier Cathedral, St John Vianney Co-Cathedral, Mater Dolorosa Church, St Brigid's Church and Presbytery) utilities, insurance, wages and costs incurred for the running of the parish office.

Apart from the day to day cleaning and general maintenance work, the following works were completed in the last financial year:

St Francis Xavier Cathedral

- Completion of Mgr John Rigney Room and Landscaping

- Completion of Renovation of Cathedral House
- Completion of Restoration of Cathedral Bell
- Completion of Restoration of Brass candle sticks
- Repairs to Cathedral lighting and painting of all church entry doors

St John Vianney Co-Cathedral & Mater Dolorosa Church

- Completion of Mater Dolorosa Church Meeting Room Upgrades and Renovations
- Good Samaritan school Sedso Funds paid out to Catholic Education Office Centralised Sedso (\$20,420)

St Brigid's Church

Sedso

- St Brigid's School Signage
- St Brigid's School internet cabling in classrooms
- St Brigid's School flooring
- St Brigid's school Sedso Funds paid out to Catholic Education Office Centralised Sedso (\$34,442)

In the last financial year, parishioners of Lumen Christi have generously contributed to the following charities:

- **Catholic Mission**
 - Propagation of the Faith \$8,500
 - World Mission \$5,029
- **Diocese of Wollongong**
 - Bishop's Annual Appeal for retired clergy \$4,803
- **St Vincent de Paul**
 - Winter Appeal \$11,630
 - Christmas Appeal \$18,710
- **Caritas**
 - Project Compassion \$7,588
- **Good Friday**
 - Holy Land \$3,258

The Year Ahead:

The year ahead brings much hope and excitement to the Lumen Christi Pastoral Region community. Our mission to serve God and bring more people to Him will be strengthened with parishioners continuing to support the various Ministries including Music ministry, Liturgical ministries, Sacraments' Program, SRE to public school, St Vincent de Paul, Formation and Prayer Groups and social activities that encourage community building.

May we embrace the opportunities with joy and open arms and navigate the challenges in love. May we always be ready to serve.



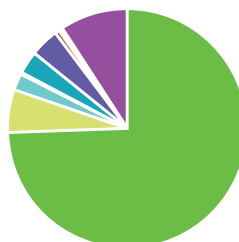
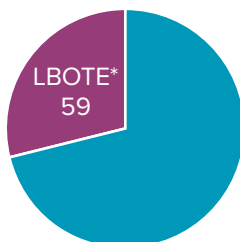
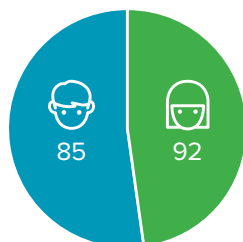
LUMEN CHRISTI
CATHOLIC PARISHES WOLLONGONG

In our Parish Schools



St Brigid's Catholic Parish Primary School, Gwynneville

Student Enrolments 2019: 177

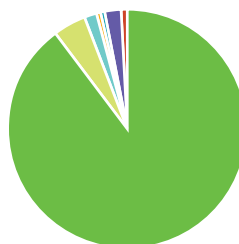
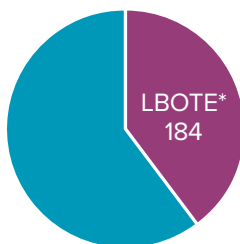
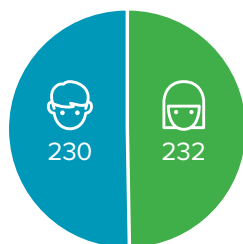


Catholics	159	Uniting	1
Orthodox	8	Other Christian	4
Anglican	3	Muslim	1
Presbyterian	1		



Good Samaritan Catholic Primary School, Fairy Meadow

Student Enrolments 2019: 462



Catholics	345	Other Christian	18
Orthodox	27	Muslim	3
Anglican	10	Buddhist	1
Baptist	1	Hindu	1
Uniting	14	No Religious Denomination	42

*LBOTE = language background other than English

Sacraments



Baptisms

137 Baptisms



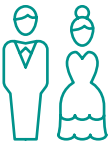
Eucharistic

94 First Holy Communion



Confirmation

100 Confirmations



Marriage

31 Marriages



Funerals

61 Funerals



R.C.I.A. (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults)

4 became Catholics in our Pastoral Region.

ST FRANCIS XAVIER CATHEDRAL



68



20



44



28



33

ST JOHN VIANNEY CO-CATHEDRAL & MATER DOLOROSA



39



46



25



1



20

ST BRIGID'S GWYNNEVILLE



30



28



31



2



8

Ministry of Catechists in Government Primary Schools

- Keiraville Primary School
- Gwynneville Primary School
- Pleasant Heights Primary School
- Balgownie Primary School
- Fairy Meadow Demonstration School
- Towradgi Primary School
- Coniston Primary School
- Mt St Thomas Primary School
- Wollongong Primary School
- Para Meadows Special School, North Wollongong

Social Gatherings

Young Adults

Young Adults gather on the first Sunday of each month at St Francis Xavier Cathedral after the 5pm Mass with some hospitality.

CatholicCare Lunch Club

The lunch was held on the first Wednesday of each month after the weekly Wednesday 12.10p.m. Mass. The venue is the Xavier Centre in the Offices of the Bishop. Whilst it was originally aimed at senior parishioners from our two parishes, we are often joined by fellow Catholics from neighbouring parishes who regularly attend the Cathedral midday Mass. Their presence adds to the friendships formed across the Diocese.

The Lunch Club brings together parishioners on a social level to promote our Catholic community and to share a meal with each other.

Due to the decline in attendance CatholicCare have rebranded and launched a new concept called Senior's Social Group which will be held on the first Wednesday of the month at Café Essay in Burelli St after 12.10pm Mass.

Jane Hollier is the Community Liaison Officer at CatholicCare.



Lumen Christi Catholic Parishes

EST. 2010 Incorporating the Parishes:

Cathedral of St Francis Xavier (Est.1838), Co-Cathedral of St John Vianney (Est.1947),
Mater Dolorosa (Est.1908), St Brigid's (Est.1948)

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