

ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF A GROWING TAURANGA CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

Dear Father Mark and Members of the Parish Council.

Thank you for the information and invitation to comment in your October letter.

I am tempted to recommend waiting for results of “With Hearts Burning” before making any decisions on this topic but acknowledge the need now to consider possible options given the work required on recladding the present Church. (How long can this be safely delayed until action must be taken – how urgent is it to make any decisions? – is there any rush?)

I like the approaches of Dr Stewart and Trish Hanlen in particular and support further consideration of ideas they raise.

Along those lines I put forward for consideration the sale of the present city site for a multi-storey office/retail/residential development including the negotiation for the Parish to own/occupy a floor, or part of one, providing for a Chapel/prayer room capable of seating (say) about 100 plus reception/ interview /confessional/counselling type rooms.

As a precedent I have in mind the success of the Holy Cross Chapel first developed in Christchurch in about mid 1960’s then later included in a new multi-storey building. It supported a thriving community. Although situated within about 2 kms of the Cathedral and St Mary’s Church it was frequented by city workers, shoppers, students and staff (University was still in the central city in those days) and by many others including those of other/no faiths who appreciated a place for quiet reflection and prayer.) Sadly the building was destroyed in the earthquakes.

With the main Church at Pyes Pa and such a smaller church in central Tauranga I envisage much more use of the other satellite Churches at Te Puna and Bethlehem, and Liturgy of the Word. (Perhaps part of many possible developments to build and support our Communities following the outcomes of “With Hearts Burning”).

I am sorry I will not be able to attend the meeting and wish you all well for your discussions.

John Williamson

16/10/17