

MACKENZIE CATHOLIC PARISH AGM
NOVEMBER 23RD 2025
CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2024 – 2025

Good morning and welcome everyone and thank you sincerely for giving up this time to support and contribute to our parish. Your commitment and involvement are truly appreciated.

Things may seem to some people to have been pretty much “business as usual” over the past 18 months since our last AGM, but at least 2 major things have happened, the Parish SLT and several Alpha courses, and that would be 3 major things if you also count the election of a new Pope.

As was reported at our last AGM an SLT was being established for our Parish, with several members of the Fairlie community having already been invited to participate and Twizel representatives now having joined the group. This team is charged with developing a vision of our Parish for the years (and indeed decades) ahead.

A conscious decision was made to call this group the Servant Leadership Team (rather than the more usual Senior Leadership Team) to reflect the dual focus which members believed the group must have of leading the Parish but, just as importantly, serving it too.

You will be familiar with the results of our Parish survey, conducted early last year, concerning the positives and negatives (the discontentments) parishioners experienced and you will also have heard the Fairlie members of the team talking about their images of our Parish. These two things have underpinned all the SLT discussions as we sought to build a Parish Vision statement.

The team has held two very positive Retreat days led by Fr. John O’Connor – who can always be relied upon to challenge and re-orient our thinking – as well as fortnightly meetings (at 6.30 in the morning) focussed on developing a strong team, a team committed to the optimal outcome for our Parish.

That Parish Vision has now been developed and it is for the Mackenzie Catholic Parish (in other words, all of us) to be a community of intentional disciples, united and guided by the Holy Spirit of the Risen Lord and focussed on Worship, Evangelisation and Service. This vision should now pose for us the question “What are we doing so far?”

First, we pray before Mass for the guidance of that Holy Spirit of the Risen Lord.

Secondly, we pray during Mass that the vision may bear fruit within our community.

Thirdly, we offer the Alpha Programme as a means of exploring, growing and nourishing our faith.

Everyone is very welcome to come to an Alpha session and experience what is on offer. These are not lectures or sermons but an opportunity to discuss and debate, to ask questions and to listen to the experiences of others and to let the Holy Spirit work within us and through us.

The fourth thing we do is to openly invite the suggestions and opinions of everyone and we fervently pray that you will share your views and ideas with us. Please don’t just sit around thinking “such and such should be done” but talk to us and tell us what you think. I know that people can be wary of sharing ideas sometimes, in case they might get co-opted onto some committee but that probably won’t happen, well I suppose it might happen – but it might not! Risk it, tell us what you think anyway – and then run!

Our Parish has been blessed to have been served by many special priests over the years and I cannot finish these remarks without mentioning one of them. Fr. Jim Nicholas died last August after 66 years of service to the priesthood. He ministered to our parish from 1970 to 1976 and again between 2007 and 2013. This return to the Mackenzie allowed us the great honour of hosting the Golden Jubilee of his ordination. Let us always remember him in our prayers along with all our departed friends and families, especially in this month of the Holy Souls.