

Dunhill Church Choir

I took over the position of Organist/ Choirmaster in September, 2001. There was a vibrant tradition in the parish at the time. In the intervening years the number of choir members was diminished but those the enthusiasm of the current membership is very gratifying.

We meet on a Wednesday evening for practice and sing at the Sunday Mass each week. Since the departure of Fr. Paul Murphy and the dependence on the Priests from Tramore, our duties at Christmas and Easter have lessened. We normally only have the morning Mass on each occasion. The members always give their best on every occasion.

The small number of members is a matter of concern from time to time. i think the Parish Council could try and encourage some old members to reconsider their decision and return. It should be pointed out to people that it is an important ministry in the Church. People should be encouraged as much as possible to participate. We do not expect choir members to have excellent voices or to be there every week. No member is asked to sing solo except they wish to do so. If new members could give some commitment, not necessarily being there every week, it would help the work very much.

We are fortunate in the choir to have the most up to date Hymn books which Fr, Murphy purchased in my early days. He also purchased the congregation version of the same Hymn Book which I feel we are not utilising enough.

Brendan Gallagher has been a great source of help to us. He has a fine voice and is always on the altar at the Masses. It is desirable in the liturgy that the congregation join the choir in singing. This could be achieved if the opening and final hymns were announced each week with the hymn number. We could always consult and agree which hymns might work for this. While congregations are very slow to respond if the correct hymns were selected some measure of success might be achieved over time.

The choir members have attended workshops in St. John's Pastoral centre from time to time. These were always encouraged and financed by the Parish. We will continue to attend these workshops in the future.

I have always been grateful to the Parish Council for their help and encouragement in the past and also to Monsignor O'Mahony, Fr. O'Neill and Brendan Gallagher whom we meet on a weekly basis. Mary Power is always there to help and encourage and finally the loyal Choir members who are always there

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and willing to work. The cooperation of so many people makes the work and worthwhile. I know this will continue into the future.

Paddy Butler

(Organist/ Choirmaster)