

Annual Report to Dio Synod covering the period May 2020 to May 2021

Summary

Since 1939, Sr Eveleen Retreat House (SERH) has been an Anglican Christian presence up Scarborough Hill on the edge of the city. It offers 12 beds for retreats for individuals and groups year round. It operates under the mandate of its Diocesan Statute (2009) to support the mission and ministry of the Diocese in the service of Jesus Christ. Now in its 3rd year since it was re-opened after the completion of EQ repairs, it continues to offer guests a ministry of space, welcome, hospitality and an opportunity to encounter the living Lord. The priority this year has been establishing a cohesive business and ministry model and finalising a full-year calendar of retreats for 2022. Next year will be about delivering on this year's planning, with the following year being a time of refinement on what has been learnt.

Major activities May 2020-April 2021

- Appointment of Eddie O'Connor as our Director and lived-in presence
- Development of a rhythm of contemplative prayer in the chapel three times a day Mon-Fri (7am, 12 noon, 6pm) for guests and passers-by. 195 attended one busy month (March)
- 200 individual booking nights (approximately)
- Ran 6 weekend retreats (themed/silent) and three 7-day retreats with new initiatives offering 'Unplugged' silent retreats to young adults
- Initial development of the Board's Mission, Strategic Vision & Plan to 2024
- Promotional marketing of the facilities undertaken on website (www.sistere.retreat.com), social media, articles, video & brochures
- Working bee repainted the outside of the Annexe (100 + hours) with many additional volunteer hours spent improving the safety, security, warmth and aesthetics in the House, Annexe and garden.
- Donations totalling \$18,000 have been received to part subsidise retreats for those on low/fixed income; & install heat pumps in House bedrooms
- Local fundraising campaign has raised \$56,000 to date in order to offer the Director a 2 year employment contract (part time) to 2023. Offers still welcomed.

Major activities planned for next 12 months

- Ten weekend and one 7-day retreat are planned to the end of 2021 and a calendar of retreats for 2022 is being prepared.
- Our Director continues his training to become a qualified Spiritual Director
- Further development of the Strategic plan, the operation of the House and addressing the issues below

Emerging issues for the Board:

- Stable governance; become known as a valued resource to Anglican/other parishes

- Ongoing repairs & maintenance to a building almost 100 years old; upgrading the kitchen and Annexe roof
- Increasing use of the facilities year round with retreats & individual bookings; increasing finances & fundraising; attracting more volunteers to help cooking, cleaning and gardening. Offers welcomed.

Appreciation

Our thanks to Bishop Peter for his encouragement; to the Diocesan Centre staff for their advice, support and provision of free financial accounting; to Eddie for his awesome commitment in fronting this day to day ministry; to the many volunteers and donors who have supported Sr Eveleen's vision in so many practical ways; to those who have served on the Board these past 12 months and for the portfolios they have carried: Fay Deam (Secretary), Glenda Prosser (Treasurer), Caroline McNeill (Marketing), Angela Moore (Strategy & Planning), Rev'd Dr Thomas Bauer (Spiritual Oversight), David Plom (Property), Michael Earle (Fundraising & outgoing Chairperson). New members are currently being recruited to replace those whose 3 year terms have expired and I welcome Glenda Prosser as the incoming Chairperson.

Invitation to Synod representatives and parishes

Sister Eveleen Retreat House is **your** taonga. Join us for worship if you are walking up Scarborough Hill Monday-Friday. Do consider the space it offers for a personal retreat, planning day or time out for your House Group, Parish Vestry, AAW, Archdeaconry or Diocesan meeting. The lounge can comfortably sit 8, max-ing to 12. Check out the space, needs of your group and suitable dates first with Eddie (ph 022 563 6879). We'd love to welcome you here, offer you space to be still in your busyness and share in God's beauty, peace, renewal and revitalisation. Let us not forget that God's first language is silence.

Michael Earle (Chairperson)

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May 6th 2021