

## **St Mary's Parish Pastoral Council**

### **Minutes of meeting Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2014**

**Present:**

*Appointed*

Simon Knowles (Chairperson)

Chris Clissitt

Martin Mayhew

Simon Stockdale

Amanda Kelly (School)

*Elected*

Cathy Binns (Support)

Mick Britton (Liturgy)

Charlotte Burrell (Formation)

Sheila Lund (Interaction)

Jeff McGillan (Activities)

*Secretary:* Chris Senior (Note Taker)

**Apologies:** None

1. **Welcome and Opening Reading** was led by Fr. William

2. **The minutes of the meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2014**

Minutes of the last meeting were approved as an accurate record.

3. **Matters Arising not covered by the Agenda**

2) **Shrine of Our Lady of the Crag**

Mick Britton reported that Kevin Anderson (Finance & Property Department: Leeds Diocese) had advised that funds were not available from the Diocese to assist with the Shrine works. The Diocese had advised that St Mary's might approach the *Little Way Association* for assistance.

Jeff McGillan gave feedback on ongoing Shrine works, noting that significant work on the trees had already been completed (though was not yet finished). Progress on this activity was being directly reported to the Finance Committee.

8) **Bond End Façade**

Fr William reported that the plans to develop and improve the Bond End aspect of the Church had now been postponed. A tentative new target date was suggested to coincide with the centenary of the Armistice in November 2018. Given this decision no approach had been made to Ampleforth exploring archiving of the existing Crucifix.

Fr William added that he had made some initial approaches to artists over the replacement of the war memorial Crucifix, and suggested a new (1.5 x lifesize) statue of Christ in a welcoming pose e.g. arms outstretched, might eventually be considered.

Cathy Binns observed that the Bond End noticeboard still required attention, although it was noted there were apparently limits on what could be achieved; as planning guidelines advised that noticeboards should not distract passing motorists.

#### 4. **Report Back from Sub-Committees (PPC 5.1)**

##### a) General Appointments:

Fr William formally welcomed Simon Stockdale and Chris Clissitt to the Council, they have both been directly appointed onto the PPC by Father on a 1 year and 3 year term respectively. These appointments were to assist the PPC following the resignation of Chris Matthewman; who recently left the Parish after years of valuable service.

##### b) School Report:

Amanda Kelly gave an itemised account of activities at St Mary's Primary school since the last PPC meeting. Many activities were external to the School, key items included:

- Appointment of Lee Talbot as Headteacher
- A number of Year 3 children had made their First Confession
- A Year 5 Choir had participated in Mass celebrations at both the School and in Church
- Children from St Marys had participated in a co-production of 'Easter Rock' with St Robert's Primary School.
- The winning (KS2) Easter card design had been printed and distributed in the Parish
- Participation of all children in the 'Smartie Swap' fundraiser for *Catholic Care*.
- Children's design of bunting and T-shirts for use in Knaresborough for the Tour de France.

Fr William confirmed that Lee Talbot would be invited to a special 'rite of welcoming' as part of a Sunday Family Mass, and a welcoming Mass at School would also be organised, these would be advertised shortly.

##### c) No other Sub-Committee Reports were made

#### 5. **SVP Consultation**

Fr William flagged an (email) approach by Siobhan Goodfield exploring the possibility of re-launching a *Saint Vincent de Paul Society* (SVP) group in the Parish, to provide the work of caring of those in Poverty in Knaresborough.

Fr William clarified that this was *not* a call for assistance in fundraising for SVP activities but for the actual delivery of care.

This suggestion was discussed and warmly welcomed by the PPC who agreed this would be a worthwhile activity of great benefit to families and individuals in the Parish.

**ACTION:** Fr William to contact Siobhan Goodfield and discuss the next steps for organising the SVP works in the Parish.

## 6. Assessing Parish Charitable Activities

Jeff McGillan tabled a short paper which outlined the historical background of St Mary's involvement and support of various overseas activities, especially in Africa. A short verbal account was also given of the work of the *Justice & Peace Group*. As part of the Discussion JM confirmed that one collection per year was made for Mostar, and that 18% of past SVP collections were tithed to head office for administration purposes.

A general discussion on the assessment and prioritisation of fundraising causes was held:

- It was agreed that charitable fundraising was extremely important, but that it was also crucial that full transparency and accountability should also be provided for the reassurance and benefit of all (donors as well as recipients).
- The major effort and commitment of individuals in the Parish who have organised and driven activities to support specific causes was impressive, inspirational and highly commended.
- Members suggested that potential donors may appreciate having a choice of schemes to which they may contribute, e.g. rather than all African activities falling under a wider blanket 'Parish appeal'.
- It was agreed that having a small number of 'Parish endorsed' causes would be useful and reassuring for all, and should also help encourage further giving.
- It was strongly felt that some explicit detail or feedback from recipients of Parish aid (e.g. describing what the funds were actually used for) would also help Parishioners better understand the impact of their generosity and work, which would also help all commit to activities and make further donations.

**ACTION:** Jeff McGillan to contact 'African' Parish Priests for more detailed information over the use of St Mary's donations to help in ongoing fundraising activities.

## 9. Tour de France (TdF): Update on Activities

Sheila Lund reported that Tony Handley (co-ordinating Knaresborough's *TdF* events) was unable to provide financial support to St Mary's to build a viewing platform. Furthermore a reserved disabled spectator area was in planning and would be sited at Knaresborough Bus Station. It was therefore agreed that a raised platform would not now be required at St Mary's.

Amanda Kelly reported that following discussions in the School the suggested provision of camping plots on the playing field was unlikely to be practicable; this due to the (term time) dates of the TdF, and the difficulties in providing secure access to water and toilet facilities. A late suggested alternative use of the playing field as a temporary car park for TdF spectators was also thought to be unlikely to be approved.

Sheila Lund noted that due to Church volunteers wanting to spectate the TdF, only limited of catering could be provided during the event; this to be restricted to sandwiches, cold drinks etc. and not on the scale of the 'Bed Race Café'. It was also acknowledged and appreciated that the same catering volunteers were already heavily committed to supporting the *Parish BBQ* on the weekend of 28-29 June i.e. this falling in the weekend immediately preceding the TdF.

A short discussion was held on possible changes to Mass times on the weekend of the TdF (Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> July). This was complicated given the extremely restricted access to the Church on Sunday and the Police closure of roads, but offered an opportunity to support the potentially high number of (Catholic) spectators visiting Knaresborough for the event. It was suggested that an early Sunday morning Mass (c. 6:00 am) could be held, and the 10:00 am Family Mass should be cancelled.

**ACTION:** Fr William to further consider alterations to Mass Times over weekend of 5<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> July and publicise changes accordingly in the Bulletin.

#### **10. 'Welcome Mass' Review**

The Welcome Mass attendance figures for Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> April were found to be broadly comparable to normal Sundays. Some new faces were seen in Church although any assessment of the success of the 'Welcome Mass' campaign was complicated by the service falling on Mother's Day *and* by the weekend's clock changes to BST (which may also have adversely affected numbers).

The special effort made by all volunteers, and especially the Catering team for the Welcome Mass, was much appreciated.

An advanced email invitation to Parish Database addresses had been posted. In response to queries Chris Clissitt confirmed the email database was reasonably accurate, but that the auditing of addresses was time consuming and therefore could not be realistically carried out on a frequent basis.

It was generally agreed that the effort made by all had been worthwhile, and that although attendance numbers had not changed very dramatically the initiative should be repeated at a future (as yet unconfirmed) time.

A fuller discussion of this issue was curtailed by time restrictions,

**ACTION:** 'Welcome Mass' would be raised again as an Agenda Item for the next PPC meeting (along with a Review of Communications in the Parish).

#### **11. Experience of the Liturgy**

In order to help provide a more enjoyable Mass experience, Fr William announced for information that he was forming a new Liturgy Committee (with Mick Britton and other representatives still tbc).

This new forum would explore ways of achieving a greater engagement in the Mass.

## 12. Dialogue Homilies

Fr William requested feedback on his use of questioning the congregation during his homilies. A short discussion raised the following points:

- There was confusion over whether the questions raised were rhetorical, or actually a real invitation for two-way debate.
- There was some concern that inviting a debate might allow disruptive or argumentative discourse, which might be contrary to the spirit of the Mass.
- Some members warmly welcomed the inclusive questioning, and the opportunity to make their own queries; though some also observed they might prefer to approach Father after the service with their questions.
- There was some hesitation to answer questions at the embarrassing or risk of being 'wrong'.
- It was noted that some parishioners would simply prefer to sit and listen.
- It was suggested that Father might clearly explain (and alert) all Parishioners about what he hoped to achieve (and how people should react) to the 'dialogue homilies' to counter any potential confusion.

## 13. Church Projector Proposal

Fr William invited comments on his proposal to install a fixed-overhead projector in the Church to support 'slide' and film presentations to the Parish, which would help better engage parishioners.

Early investigations with suppliers gave estimated costs of c. £4K - £5K depending on orientation and equipment (e.g. lenses) required. Fr William noted this equipment would remove the unsatisfactory current *ad hoc* temporary projector (and its associated cable trip-hazard) but in addition to the cost, this would require a slight remodelling of some features of the Church, including the position of the Stations of the Cross.

Feedback raised by members included:

- Members were generally very supportive of the proposed installation.
- The proposed location of the projection area onto the [Altar] wall was queried, it was felt this area would be in an unsighted position for the extreme arms of the seated congregation.
- Projection of images onto the organ wall was suggested as an alternative location; although the siting of the projector for this display might be difficult to achieve without the equipment being unsightly.
- It was suggested that an alternative technology approach could explore the mounting of a large wall-mounted 'plasma' screen which might be as effective as a projector, and could be innocuous in appearance when not in use.
- Any changes that may be required to the current locations of the Stations of the Cross were not seen as a major problem.
- Security concerns over an expensive (and desirable) projector in an unsupervised public space would also need to be addressed.

**14. Items Brought to PPC by the Parish**

Mick Britton noted concerns had been raised by an individual over the poor levels of representation of women in Parish committees.

A short discussion followed. In general, the ratio of male : female post holders was not believed to be a major concern at St Mary's. It was felt that representation was made according to the role of the post, and was not specifically driven by the gender of individual committee members.

**15. Any Other Business**

a) Easter Egg Hunt: Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> April

Jeff McGillan reminded all that the annual Easter Egg Hunt would be held in the Church garden (subject to the weather) after Easter Sunday Morning Mass. It was noted that this was provided as a 'free' event, although any contributions made to tea and coffee refreshments would be welcomed.

b) Annual Reports

It was confirmed that the Parish website would be used as the primary communication channel to make available all required Annual Reports (e.g. Financial Accounts) plus the annual Parish tallies of Births, Marriages and Deaths.

The Weekly Bulletin would be used to draw the attention of all St Mary's Parishioners to the mounting or publication of this information

**16. Future Meetings**

1900 – 2030 Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2014

1900 – 2030 Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2014

1900 – 2030 Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2015

**17. Final prayer**

Fr. William closed the meeting with a prayer.