

St Mary's Parish Pastoral Council

Minutes of meeting Thursday 4th May 2017

Present:

- Fr William Wright (Acting Chair)

Appointed

- Chris Clissitt
- Paul Jackson (School)
- Joanne Brennan

Elected

- Teresa Britton (Liturgy)
- Charlotte Burrell (Formation)
- Amanda Kelly (Support)
- Sheila Lund (Interaction)
- Jeff McGillan (Mission)

Apologies: Simon Stockdale, Stephen Walker (Finance), Chris Senior (Secretary)

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

2. **Parish Priest update**

Fr William gave an update on his aims for the Parish outlined at the last meeting.

Liturgy: standing for the Eucharistic prayer and joining the priest with hand gestures for the offertory and the "Our Father" has been introduced for the Easter season. No great parish reaction yet to standing but one parishioner has indicated a lack of keenness. It was noted that some people automatically knelt for the consecration despite others standing. Fr William felt a greater sense of people joining with him in the celebration.

Joining in with hand gestures has been mixed so far with the observation that some felt self-conscious and were therefore not able to concentrate on the prayers. This is the subject of a proposed new question for the parish appraisal.

Welcome: separate agenda item

Outreach (Mission): it was felt there was so much attention at present on the parish debt that it had not been possible to make progress in this area.

A spare chalice has been found in storage in the church. Father William proposed to sell the chalice and put the proceeds in the building fund. A vote was held and majority of 7 to 1 were in favour of the sale.

Post meeting note: subsequent to the May council, documentation has come to light that prevents the sale of the chalice.

3. **The minutes of the PPC meeting on 23rd February 2017**

The Minutes of the last meeting were approved as an accurate record (proposed by Paul Jackson, seconded by Teresa Britton.)

4. **Actions and matters arising from the PPC February 2017 meeting (not itemised in the Agenda)**

3) Matters Arising from PPC July 2016 meeting....

4) Attendance

As noted last time, the possibility of holding the Parish AGM after each of the three Masses (in successive years) was worth consideration. The AGM this year will be after the Sunday 10am mass, but in 2018 it will be held after the Sunday 5pm mass. A notice will be placed in the next bulletin to this effect.

3) Matters Arising from PPC October 2016 meeting....

8) Africa envelope scheme

The actions below are carried forward:

ACTION: Jeff McGillan to transfer current J&P funds (balance of £2,321.95) into the main Church account.

ACTION: Jeff McGillan to consider a new reminder presentation at a forthcoming Sunday Masses re the 3 African parish causes, and to post more information in the Bulletin to help encourage an increase in donor numbers.

ACTION: Jeff McGillan to approach each cause and ask for more details of their immediate needs to better inform how the Parish might spend the transferred balance from the old J&P account.

10) Home-School Parish links

It was noted that some parents stay for class masses after dropping off their children. Paul Jackson is going to check that a link to the Ofsted report is available on the school website.

11) Parishioner Submissions to PPC

b) Clarify Status of Christmas Eve Mass

Noting that Liz Jones, the current coordinator of the Children's Christmas Eve Mass, was standing down, Fr William confirmed that he had approached a suitable candidate who is considering the request.

12) Review of the PPC and its Constitution

4. Offices of the Parish Pastoral Council

ACTION: Jeff McGillan to draft posters and arrange publicity re PPC member details on noticeboards – action carried forward.

ACTION: Father William to correct revision date of recently reissued PPC Guidelines and Constitution.

15) Website presentation

ACTION: Fr William to provide a presentation to the Parish about the website – action carried forward.

5. **Welcome**

Although this has been discussed at several previous meetings of the PPC (see notes of July 2016 and October 2016 meetings) Fr William identified that we still had a problem, particularly when socialising after mass. Nearly every Sunday he sees somebody, a couple or a family alone at coffee after mass and sometimes “nudges” a parishioner to go and talk to them.

In the past, without wishing to be complacent and open to ways to improve, the PPC has held the view that we are, by and large, a friendly and welcoming parish. Views and ideas expressed at this meeting included the following:

- More PPC members to attend after mass coffee
- It was noted that Holy Communion classes had helped parents to get to know each other
- Not everyone has the right skills or disposition to approach people and chat, particularly when it means “breaking in” to small group who already know each other (e.g. Holy Communion or Confirmation parents)
- Have a welcomer role specifically for after mass coffee. May need a more formal “role” (e.g. biscuit bearer) to be able to approach people more easily and start conversations
- People serving coffee to note people who are alone and “nudge” another parishioner to go and talk to them
- Other parishes people had visited were cited as far less friendly examples and St Mary’s was considered very good by comparison
- Father William to speak at the end of each mass one Sunday to say how important it is to meet and welcome others and socialise

6. **Refurbishment/building works 2017**

The refurbishment schedule was circulated to the PPC in advance,

Note that work commences on 8th May. The majority of the work will take place in June with all the decoration at the end of the project.

7. **St John’s car park permits**

Fr William has obtained 10 car parking permits and has asked the PPC to suggest names of parishioners who would benefit from them.

It was suggested that this may be another opening for a welcomer to help visitors and parishioners with parking.

8. Palm Sunday 9.45am start proposal

This was put to the liturgy group who were supportive, but the parish council felt that it might confuse people and inevitably some would arrive late. The proposal was prompted by the ringing of the bells at St John's at 10am drowning out the gospel reading before the procession.

Father William has since been in discussion with the captain of the bell ringers and is hopeful that they can reach agreement to pause the bells while the gospel reading takes place.

9. Donations for sacramental preparation

Currently there are no fees payable for First Holy Communion or Confirmation courses although both involve much work in preparation and delivery. With fewer monks at Ampleforth earning money for the community there are business reasons for seeking some income for services provided.

Whilst this point was acknowledged, there was quite a strong body of opinion that this felt wrong, could put people off, risk bad press and we would not want to put people off sacramental preparation.

It was also agreed that in some circumstances it was considered etiquette to make a donation for services received. Therefore it was necessary to think very carefully how to put the thought of the possibility of a donation into people's minds without alienating them.

Ideas included a second collection on First Holy Communion day or a note setting out that there is no charge for the programme of preparation (both Communion and Confirmation) but donations if desired could be made for the upkeep of the church and the clergy.

10. Reports Circulated:

A number of written reports were circulated in advance. The Reports received (and any comments from the PPC meeting not noted elsewhere) were as follows:

- a) Fundraising Report (Sheila Lund).
No comments to this previously circulated paper
- b) Financial Report (Stephen Walker)
No comments to this previously circulated paper
- c) School Report (Paul Jackson)
No comments to this previously circulated paper
- d) Formation Report (Charlotte Burrell)
No comments to this paper circulated at the meeting

11. Parish Appraisal 2017

Father William circulated in advance the proposed questionnaire for the 2017 parish appraisal. Although it had been argued at the last meeting that it should remain largely unaltered to allow statistical comparison with the 2015 survey, there were a number of areas where it would be beneficial to gain an understanding of parish views. These include response to liturgical actions of the priest, standing during the Eucharistic prayer and using hand gestures. Similarly, certain questions are no longer relevant, such as funding the projector installation.

It was decided that the new appraisal should contain a mixture of repeat questions to track changes in satisfaction and new questions to address current issues.

There will also be space for comments after several selected questions, not just at the end of the survey.

12. AGM

Fr William will use the "Report to Chapter" (circulated in advance) as the basis for the report to the parish at the AGM on Sunday 7th May.

13. Future Meetings

11.00	AGM, Sunday 7 th May 2017
19:00 – 20:30	Thursday 20 th July 2017
19:00 – 20:30	Thursday 19 th October 2017
19:00 – 20:30	Thursday 22 nd February 2018
18.00	AGM, Sunday 6 th May 2018
NEW 19:00 – 20:30	Thursday 3 rd May 2018

14. Final Prayer

The meeting closed with a prayer.