

St Mary's Parish Pastoral Council

Minutes of meeting Thursday 28th February 2019

Present:

- Fr William Wright (Chair)

Appointed

- Carmel Bridson
- Chris Clissitt
- Simon Stockdale

Elected

- Teresa Britton (Liturgy).
- Amanda Kelly (Support)
- Frances Watson (Formation)

- Chris Senior (Secretary)

- Apologies: Julie Finn (Mission), Paul Jackson (School), Vince McGurk

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

2. **Thanks**

Fr William formally thanked long-standing outgoing PPC councillors; Sheila Lund (Interaction) and Charlotte Burrell (Formation). Each had served for two terms in their respective posts and their considerable contributions were very much appreciated.

Frances Watson was also welcomed to her elected role as PPC councillor (Formation).

3. **Apologies**

As recorded above.

4. **Parish Priest introduction**

Fr William provided some background and summarised discussions held since August 2018 between Fr Gabriel (Prior Administrator and Acting Superior of the Ampleforth Community) and Marcus Stock (Bishop of Leeds).

The outcomes of these extended discussions, as ratified by an Extraordinary Chapter Meeting (January 2019), will be the full transfer of St. Mary's Parish Knaresborough from Ampleforth to the Diocese of Leeds.

The transfer of the Parish to the Diocese will formally occur on Monday 1st April 2019.

As part of the transition process Fr William has agreed to continue to serve as Parish Priest at St. Mary's for a period of up to 5 years, dating from April 2019.

A press notice is currently being drafted. Fr William will however directly verbally inform the Parish on this important matter in the coming Sunday Masses (Sunday 3rd March).

A reaction, discussion and Q&A session followed.

In brief, the PPC warmly welcomed the continuing commitment and service of Fr William at St. Mary's for the next 5 years, while acknowledging the significance of the changes that would occur. Although this development was not unexpected (given the national problem of clergy shortages) the news was still nonetheless disappointing given the considerable history between the Parish and Ampleforth. The practical and operational detail of the changes that would be required at St Mary's would hopefully become clearer over time.

5. **The minutes of the PPC meeting on 18th October 2018**

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

6. **Actions and matters arising from the PPC October 2018 meeting (not itemised in the Agenda)**

5) Matters Arising from the PPC July 2018 Meeting

10) Proposed Replacement of Blinds

Fr William confirmed that all 4 top windows of the Church (and the lower NW side windows) would be fitted with blinds in Spring 2019.

5) Matters Arising from the PPC July 2018 Meeting

6) GDPR: General Data Protection Regulations

Chris Clissitt noted the imminent change of administration of St. Marys (See Item 4) now meant the Diocese of Leeds would become the 'Data Controller' and the source of the *Privacy Notice* as required by GDPR legislation.

ACTION: Chris Clissitt would update the text of the parish *Privacy Notice*. In April.

All other outstanding Actions were completed, or otherwise raised as Agenda items.

7. **2017 Appraisal Results**

Item not discussed due to lack of time.

ACTION: 2017 Appraisal Results to be raised as a May 2019 Agenda item.

8. Liturgical Experience

Fr William introduced the item to explore further ways for Parishioners to 'rediscover' the liturgy in order to keep the Mass relevant and engaging. The Mass should not be seen just as a practice of cultural tradition, but should be both uplifting and enjoyable. Fr William was concerned that many in the Parish did not appear to 'engage' with the service and that personal interaction between the Priest and congregation during the Mass was minimal. It was acknowledged the engagement problem was a Church wide issue (i.e. not only St. Mary's) but a situation that should still be actively addressed locally.

A discussion followed, key points and suggestions included:

- It was felt there was a danger of misinterpreting whether Parishioners were actually engaged, it was believed many were involved but were just not especially demonstrative.
- Providing choice in how to worship was important, directions (or orders) to act in a particular matter should be avoided.
- The language in (recent translation of) the Mass did not encourage engagement e.g. term 'consubstantiation' was ill chosen and difficult to interpret or relate to.
- The use of music in low-attendance Masses was regarded as actually detracting from a good experience.
- Traditional 'Cradle Catholics' had been carefully educated not to make eye contact or engage openly with the Priest; this would be a significant barrier to engagement in the celebration of the liturgy
- Parishioners reactions had been very mixed (both strongly for and against) over previous pilot initiatives on this theme e.g. 2017 Easter practice of standing v kneeling.
- It was felt essential that Fr William reinforce and explain (on a frequent, even weekly basis) the reasoning for encouraging engagement in the celebration of the liturgy.
- It was considered that parishioners reading along to Sunday Mass readings (using the pre-printed texts in the parish bulletin) did not help people engage with the message.
- Suggested that full-text readings should be provided *for the following Sunday* (to assist in contemplative preparation) and so not distract from active listening.
- Parishioners with hearing disabilities or other conditions which were not supportive of standing for long periods (and with impact on sight-lines) must also be catered for.
- There was strong PPC support for repeating the (2017) Easter 'invitation' to stand during Eucharistic Prayer; this to be used in the imminent Easter 2019 festival.
- The introduction of any new liturgical practices should be carefully and slowly introduced to avoid alienating parishioners facing too much change in a short period.

Fr William thanked members for their comments and would consider the above further.

ACTION: Fr William agreed to introduce an invitation to stand during the Eucharistic Prayer for Easter 2019, this would be deliberately applied for a fixed-term period.

9. 2019 Appraisal

Fr William confirmed his plans to run the biennial Appraisal in 2019. The item was not otherwise discussed due to lack of time.

ACTION: 2019 Appraisal to be raised as a May 2019 Agenda item.

10. Finance Report

The report had been previously circulated.

No further comments were raised.

11. School Report

Fr William noted the report had been forwarded by Paul Jackson, but had not yet been circulated to the PPC.

ACTION: School Report to be circulated by Fr William to PPC asap.

12. Friends of St Mary's School: FOSM

A letter from FOSM (4th February 2019) had been circulated to PPC councillors, inviting closer links between the volunteer group of the School and the Parish: this including the offer of a dedicated trustee position to a St Mary's parishioner on the FOSM committee.

The initiative was generally welcomed by the Council and it was observed any parishioner (not just a PPC member) might usefully serve as an FOSM trustee e.g. if as a parent they already had children in attendance at the School.

ACTION: ALL to consider either directly volunteering for the role on the FOSM Committee or identifying any other parishioner who might usefully serve as a trustee. Feedback in either case to Fr William.

13. PPC Elections – Encouraging Engagement

Item not discussed due to lack of time.

ACTION: PPC Elections to be raised as a May 2019 Agenda item.

14. Future Meetings

19:00 – 20:30 Thursday 2nd May 2019
18.00 AGM, Sunday 5th May 2019 (after 5:00pm Mass)
19:00 – 20:30 Thursday 25th July 2019
19:00 – 20:30 Thursday 17th October 2019
NEW 19:00 – 20:30 Thursday 27th February 2020

15. Final Prayer

The meeting closed with a prayer.