

St Mary's Parish Pastoral Council

Minutes of meeting Thursday 16th January 2014

Present:

Father William Wright (Parish Priest)	Amanda Kelly (School)
Simon Knowles (Chairperson)	Sheila Lund (Interaction)
Cathy Binns (Support)	Jeff McGillan (Activities)
Mick Britton (Liturgy B)	Martin Mayhew
Charlotte Burrell (Formation)	Simon Stockdale (Liturgy A)
	Chris Senior (Note Taker)

Apologies: Chris Matthewman

1. **Welcome and opening prayer** was led by Fr. William

2. **The minutes of the meeting on 24th October 2013**

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

Before Christmas Mick Britton had contacted Kevin Anderson 'Finance & Property Department: Diocese of Leeds' to explore possible sources of funding or support for the Shrine. The issue was due to be raised at an imminent (January) meeting of the Diocesan Trustees, and feedback was then promised to MB.

ACTION: Mick Britton to re-contact Kevin Anderson re outcomes of Diocesan Trustees meeting if no news was forthcoming over the few weeks.

4) Hall Development

All were encouraged by Fr William to continue to pass suggestions of potential (income generation) uses of the Church Hall to help inform refurbishment plans.

ACTION: ALL to consider potential income generation sources which might be supported in a refurbished Hall and directly contact either Steven Perry (Chair of new Church Hall Working Party), Fr. William, or Simon Knowles with any ideas.

6) Falling Mass Attendances

Fr. William requested a short debate over any practices at St Mary's which might contribute to alienating visitors and discouraging returning parishioners.

It was suggested that past experience of lengthy Masses (over 1 hour 15 mins) had caused some problems; partly exacerbated with the recent major changes in the Order of Mass. However at present the longest (Sunday 10am) Mass and music now lasted ca. 1 hour which was felt to be an optimum duration.

Although it was acknowledged that much shorter services might be welcomed by some, it was unanimously felt that undue haste could endanger the essential importance of the Celebration of the Mass.

It was noted that Fr William's recent invitation to the congregation to "turn around and welcome a stranger" was a positive experience and should be occasionally repeated.

8) Bond End Façade

Cathy Binns reported her investigation of the external Bond End Crucifix confirmed that it was believed to have been installed as a 'Great War' memorial, with unconfirmed links to a long-standing Knaresborough family. The crucifix was also recognised as a war memorial by the *Royal British Legion*. However without access to Parish archives nothing further of significance could be discovered about its source and history.

The following discussion noted the timing sensitivity in removing the crucifix during the current centenary commemoration of the Great War. It was however suggested that the installation of a new memorial crucifix (while preserving the current Crucifix in the Ampleforth archives) could provide a major opportunity to newly remember and reaffirm the importance of the conflict; this could be further enhanced by the installation of a suitable memorial plaque.

Fr William proposed that any new Crucifix would not be an empty cross (as at the Hall entrance to the Church); but that it would show Christ in death (not Christ in agony) as previously discussed.

12 b) Fees on Parish Website

Fr. William had investigated the phrasing of the website to check if a clear distinction did exist between donations and fees. On reflection he found the wording to be sufficiently clear, and also confirmed that use of a clear financial statement was an Ampleforth requirement.

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

a) School:

No formal School Report was made, however Amanda Kelly did flag the appointment of the new Head Teacher at St Marys (Lee Talbot, currently Deputy Head at *Richard Taylor Primary School Harrogate*) who was due to take up his post in April 2014. Christine Wray was continuing to support the School in a part-time interim role.

It was unclear if news of the appointment was more widely known in the Parish, and it was agreed that steps would be taken to publicise the appointment in the Bulletin

ACTION: Fr William to arrange for a Bulletin notice re the new Head Teacher at St Mary's.

Simon Stockdale suggested a formal service could be held to "Commission the New Head Teacher" which was warmly welcomed.

It was intended that further discussions between Fr William and the new Head would seek to improve links between Church and School, and seek more involvement of the School in 'social' church activities.

b) Finance:

A short discussion related to fundraising was held where it was suggested that the organisation, status and activity of some Parish charitable groups was not especially clear. Some of (largely unrelated) issues subsequently mentioned were:

- Better attempts should be made to promote and publicise St Mary's activity in supporting good causes.
- Issuing of formal 'Parish Approval' for certain charitable activities might be helpful for both St Mary's and the cause in general.
- Our church provides a focus for such groups and does good within our community.
- There was uncertainty among members over the (official or semi-official) parish endorsement of some long-standing foreign and other charitable aid works.
- Some of the current activities included, though were not limited to; Cenacalo, (prosthetic limb project in Bosnia); support of the drug rehabilitation project in Bradford, and the *Justice & Peace* activities supporting Fr Terry Madden's Burkino Faso parish.
- Attempts would be made at the forthcoming Easter egg hunt (with the larger congregations) to develop this as a fund raising opportunity for a suitable cause.

ACTION: Item to be included in next *PPC Agenda* to establish (and discuss) the various charitable / fundraising activities and groups supported at St Mary's. This to help determine if any priorities should be set for ongoing fundraising activities.

c) Other Sub-committees

No items were reported from other Parish sub-groups.

5. **Tour de France (TdF): Hospitality and Viewing for those with Special Needs**

Fr William sought feedback on his suggestion that the Bond End side of the Church could be usefully exploited to provide reserved elevated viewing (and other facilities) for those with special needs to enjoy the Tour de France on the 6th July.

Members noted that issues to be investigated would be health & safety requirements re. the proposed installation of a temporary (scaffold) platform and ramp, advanced booking and costs for erection, and any special issues re. wheelchair access.

It was felt that the Council could be approached for further advice and assistance. It was not known if *Henshaws Arts & Craft Centre* were providing a similar viewing position for the race.

ACTION: Sheila Lund to approach Tony Handley (co-ordinating Knaresborough's *TdF* events) for support, which may include some potential for supportive funding.

It had been thought that the provision of Church Hall & Garden catering on the same scale of Bed Race catering would be difficult (given the draw of the event to volunteers), but some members were willing to give up a spectator view to give catering cover during the passing of the peloton. Full scale catering would therefore be now considered to maximise income and a rota organised.

ACTION: Sheila Lund to organise full-scale (Bed Race) catering and duty rota for the *TdF*.

Other income generation activities were in outline planning, including a Parish BBQ on the weekend before the race and children's bicycle themed activities in the preceding weeks.

It was suggested the St Mary's School may be able to provide camping accommodation for visitors on the playing fields. The practicalities were unclear given the School was still in session the following day, and with the necessity for providing access to toilet facilities and water.

ACTION: Amanda Kelly to investigate within the School the suggestion of providing a *TdF* campsite on the playing fields.

6. **Lent Course on the Theology of the Body**

To help celebrate the forthcoming Canonisation of Blessed John Paul II, Fr William was interested in providing a series of evening talks to the Parish on John Paul's major teachings on the *Theology of the Body* during Lent.

These sessions were welcomed by members and it was suggested an optimum time for 6 sessions (of 60 minutes) were to hold them each Tuesday at 7.30 pm (following 7.00 pm evening Mass); with the series launching on Tuesday 11th March.

ACTION: Fr William to arrange suitable advertising e.g. in the Bulletin for his Lent lecture series on the *Theology of the Body*.

7. **Initiative to Invite People (Back) to St Mary's (Easter 2014)**

A series of possible events and activities were discussed, including:

Improving School : Church links (as outreach to non-attending Parents)

- Working with the new Head Teacher at St Mary's to investigate how to improve links between Church and School (see above 4a).
- Promoting the Church garden Easter Egg Hunt more directly in the School, ideally as a publicity campaign using posters, flyers, notices for children's bookbags etc.
- Church social activities (e.g. quizzes) also promoted within the School to parents.

To assist other Parishioners:

- Additional use of Eucharistic Ministers to help reduce the waiting during the major, well attended services at Easter
- Issue a call in the Bulletin inviting anyone to alert Fr William of any known parishioner who was unable to attend Church (e.g. due to mobility problems) so that regular volunteer transportation could be organised.
- Use of the Parish database to send written invitations for renewing attendance.

Sheila Lund also reported that the *Welcome Pack* had undergone significant revision and reformatting with the assistance of Mick Britton. It was agreed this booklet could form a very useful part of the campaign. As the *Welcome Pack* was now nearing completion all PPC members were invited to provide direct feedback on its contents.

ACTION: Mick Britton to electronically circulate the draft *Welcome Pack*. ALL to provide immediate feedback to MB allow for final editing and printing in time for the campaign.

8. **Church Hall Working Party**

Fr William reported for information that a new Working Party had been formed under the Chair of Steven Perry to drive the design and refurbishment of the Church Hall. This group would report its findings and recommendations directly to the Finance Committee.

9. **PPC Elections (PPC 3.5)**

Fr William reminded all that the PPC posts of *Liturgy A* and *Liturgy B* would be replaced by a single *Liturgy* position in the forthcoming elections; this was due to be held on the Fourth Sunday of Ordinary Time (2nd February 2014).

ACTION: Fr William would issue timely reminders to the Parish of the proposal of names (to be posted on the Atrium board) and the actual election programme and process.

10. PPC Elections (PPC 4.2)

The office of *PPC Chairperson* (which is directly elected by PPC members for a 1 year term and renewable for a maximum of 3 successive terms) was due for renewal at the January meeting.

A secret ballot was held and Simon Knowles was duly re-elected for his (second) term of office as *PPC Chairperson*.

11. PPC Elections (PPC 4.3)

The role of *PPC Liaison Officer* (unoccupied) was also due for election at the January meeting.

However following discussion among members the role and remit of the post in relation to St Mary's seemed unclear, and the role was unanimously regarded as unnecessary; even potentially contradictory to the liaison and communication role held by all PPC members.

It was therefore agreed to forego the position of *Liaison Officer* and amend the *Parish Pastoral Council: Constitution & Guidelines*.

12. Matters Raised from the Parish

Cathy Binns passed on concerns that had been raised about the rubbish at the rear of the Church Hall, and indiscriminate dumping of litter by non-parishioners.

Fr William noted this problem had been separately raised with Steven Perry (Hall Manager) and aside from continued efforts to keep the area tidy, a more permanent litter bin solution would be considered as part of the Hall refurbishment works.

13. Future Meetings

1900 – 2030 Thursday 10th April 2014

1900 – 2030 Thursday 17th July 2014

1900 – 2030 Thursday 23rd October 2014

1900 – 2030 Thursday 19th February 2015

14. Final prayer

Fr. William closed the meeting with a prayer.