

St Mary's Parish Pastoral Council

Minutes of meeting Thursday 23rd February 2017

Present:

- Fr William Wright (Acting Chair)

Appointed

- Chris Clissitt
- Paul Jackson (School)
- Simon Stockdale

Elected

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

Secretary: Chris Senior (Note Taker)

Apologies: Joanne Brennan, Stephen Walker (Finance),

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

2. **Welcome to New Councillors**

Fr William formally welcomed Teresa Britton and Simon Stockdale in their new posts.

The Council also expressed thanks to the work and contribution of the outgoing PPC members Mick Britton and Martin Mayhew.

3. **Apologies**

Recorded above

4. **Parish Priest input**

Fr William gave a prepared address outlining his aims for the Parish. In summary to grow the Parish based around; Liturgy, Welcome and Outreach (Mission) activities.

5. **The minutes of the PPC meeting on 20th October 2017**

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

6. **Matters Arising from the PPC October 2017 meeting (not itemised in the Agenda)**

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

4) Attendance

Fr William expanded on his decision not to hold an 'Open forum' in addition to the existing AGM. All weekdays except Sunday were likely to prove challenging to achieve good attendances, although the possibility of holding the Parish AGM after each of the three Masses (in successive years) was worth consideration. Jeff McGillan suggested that the AGM should be held, with refreshments, in the Hall not the church with a much shorter comfort break between Mass and the meeting as discussed previously.

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

6) Letter of Valerie Walker to PPC

Fr William confirmed that due to popularity of current practice that a suggested 'Quiet' Mass (without music) was very unlikely. However Fr William announced the reconvening of the Liturgy Consultation Group which would consider the matter.

5) Celebration of 1st Holy Communion

Fr William confirmed his intention for a children's party to be held at Church Hall after Sunday 9th July Mass for the current group of children who would have received first Holy Communion over the preceding weeks.

7) Reserving Seats

Fr William noted that the PPC suggestion of not reserving seats (with the exception of the Christmas Eve Children's Mass) would be introduced as a trial.

8) Africa envelope scheme

Jeff McGillan reported that 22 parishioners had responded to the recent relaunch of the envelope scheme. This generosity was welcome although was somewhat lower than the 43 members active in the previous version of the scheme; even when acknowledging some previous donors were known to have left the parish. JM noted that 'Open Arms Malawi' were prepared to make a presentation to the Parish.

JM reported that the current J&P funds (balance of £2,321.95) would be transferred into the main Church accounts in the very near future which would then allow direct debit instructions for the new scheme to be activated.

JM also asked the PPC for guidance on where the above balance should now be spent, though it was assumed some degree of distribution was likely between the Zimbabwe, Malawi and Burkina Faso causes as previously approved by the Parish.

It was suggested the 22 new contributors could be asked for their preferences, but it was also noted that donating a larger amount to the 'smaller' causes could prove very effective. JM also noted the continuing difficulties of ensuring funds reached the parish of Ouahigouya in Burkina Faso.

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.

9) Risen Christ Figure (Bond End) Sculpture

Fr William informed the PPC that the debate over the proposed sculpture was currently being handled by the Finance Committee.

11) Parishioner Submissions to PPC

a) Hymn Boards Reinstalled

Fr William noted that despite offering his contact details re. advanced notice of hymns at forthcoming Masses, that nobody had actually contacted him to date.

7. Mass Attendance Figures

Fr William reported for information of PPC the following pattern of declining Mass attendances at St Mary's over the last 4 years based on the annual October mean

<i>Year</i>	October Sundays (Diocese Survey)	Christmas Mass (Excl. Children's Mass)
<i>2013</i>	256	297
<i>2014</i>	232	272
<i>2015</i>	225	270
<i>2016</i>	228	277

This pattern mirrored the national situation re Mass attendances.

Paul Jackson observed that the parallel, if unrelated, decline in baptisms was a particular concern for the School which faced shrinking enrolment (which may well be influenced by the drop in Catholic children numbers) and a subsequent reduction to School income.

It was noted that attendances at the Sunday evening Mass had increased in popularity over this time.

8. Our Welcome Ministry

Fr William covered this matter in Item 4

9. Car Park

Fr William sought approval of the proposed offer of some spaces in St John's car park for elderly or disabled users - as noted in the advanced circulated paper.

The suggestion was welcomed although the detail of how this would be administrated (e.g. use and distribution of permits or reserved spaces) was unclear.

Sheila Lund noted that St Mary's own car park could be more effectively used and that parishioners should be encouraged to consider more efficient parking to maximise the available space.

ACTION: Fr William to approach St John's for more details of the operational aspects of the Car Park scheme.

ACTION: Fr William to draft a Bulletin notice requesting more considerate parking.

10. Home-School Parish Links

Fr William and Paul Jackson clarified that public (adult) attendance at any Mass held at School would be carefully managed to address child safety and welfare concerns. As such announcements and open invitations to any School Mass would not now be issued in the Parish Bulletin.

PJ noted the regular attendance of Fr William in the playground at the beginning of the School day (as parents dropped off children) was a welcome initiative.

PJ alerted the PPC that the decline in the size of the reception class (20 this current school year, and projected at 22 in 2017-18) was a cause of concern not least as it affected School income and finances. Discussions were already underway to strengthen School links to the Nursery and PPC members urged a better engagement with local Catholic families who did not attend St Mary's church (suggested by using the Parish database subject to revision).

Otherwise the St Mary's School was performing well, and was fully staffed (albeit with relatively low numbers of practising Catholic staff and teachers which reflected national trends).

11. Parishioner Submissions to PPC

a) Garden

A pre-circulated written response was discussed in answer to Enid Cox's 10th February letter to the PPC suggesting the adopting of 'wildlife friendly' practices in the Church garden.

In brief the PPC noted that such practices were already largely employed and that the efforts of the Parish in maintaining the garden had also been praised by *Knaresborough in Bloom*.

The draft PPC response was approved and would be sent to Enid Cox shortly.

b) Clarify Status of Christmas Eve Mass

As a result of a Bulletin entry (as recommended previously by the PPC) explaining the rationale for the Children's Christmas Eve Mass, Fr William had been asked by a parishioner to further clarify the status of this mass as regards fulfilling the Holy Day of Obligation

Fr William explained that an interpretation of this Mass as satisfying the demands of 'Obligation' could vary between parishes, and that he would denote this mass as fulfilling the obligation if he considered this was in the pastoral interests of the parish. However Fr William's primary intention was to encourage parishioners *without children* to consider attending the Christmas Masses and help improve the experience for children and adults alike, by alleviating the overcrowding of the Christmas Eve Mass and repopulating the Christmas Masses. The 'Obligation' aspect was deliberately downplayed in the bulletin entry, but there for people for whom the fulfilment of the obligation was a concern

Charlotte Burrell reported that Liz Jones, the current coordinator of the Children's Christmas Eve Mass, was standing down. If this Mass was to be held again in its current form (which PPC members agreed was desirable as it encouraged attendance) a new volunteer was needed. Fr William reported that he was already investigating and hoped to identify a candidate.

12. Review of the PPC and its Constitution

As required (every 3 years) PPC members formally reviewed the Constitution. The matters discussed and amendments [Constitution paragraph numbers below] were as follows:

3. Composition of PPC & Terms of Office

3.2 Agreed use of 'Mission' to replace term Activities

3.10 Fr William noted he had omitted to invite nominations when the appointed seat on the PPC recently became vacant at the end of their term of office. The retention, and future application of, this clause was supported by PPC members.

4. Offices of the Parish Pastoral Council

4.3 The absence of a nominated 'Liaison Officer' at St Mary's was discussed, it was felt the formal role superfluous given the strong representative nature of all PPC members.

Following a vote it was unanimously agreed that photographs of current PPC members would be displayed on the Atrium notice boards to encourage direct contact, although the parish phone and email (parish@stmarysknaresborough.org.uk) would be used as the primary contact channels. It was also preferred that letters from parishioners could be left in the atrium for forwarding to individual members.

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

6. Relationship with Deanery & Diocesan Parish Councils

6.1 Fr William confirmed that there were (currently) no Diocesan Parish Councils but that St Mary's representation would be considered if this situation changed.

8. Conduct of Meetings of the PPC

8.1 It was noted that the PPC actually met four (not three) times each year. All PPC members agreed that four meetings p.a. (plus the AGM) should be maintained.

13. **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

14. **Parish Appraisal 2017**

It was agreed that the new Appraisal Survey would remain largely unaltered to allow statistical comparison with the 2015 survey and measure changes in satisfaction or progress.

The 2015 question over the proposed installation of a projector could be omitted, although a follow-up question asking how parishioners regarded the installed projector might be useful.

The introduction of a parallel (identical questions) online survey was strongly supported, not least to allow participation of those who were unable to attend the Survey weekend's Mass. It was agreed that encouraging parishioners to fill in the survey directly after Mass had been very effective in maximising feedback and would usefully be repeated,

Fr William expressed a wish to further consider the content of the Survey, and would value PPCs subsequent feedback. Therefore the 2017 survey would not be held until after the next PPC meeting (i.e. would not be at Easter as initially planned).

ACTION: Jeff McGillan to investigate the provision of a suitable online survey for use in the next Parish Appraisal.

ACTION: Parish Appraisal 2017 to be raised as an Agenda item at next PPC meeting.

15. **Website Presentation**

Fr William sought feedback over giving a demonstration and presentation (at Mass) about St Mary's Parish Website (stmarysknaresborough.org). PPC members welcomed the idea.

ACTION: Fr William would provide a presentation to the Parish about the website.

16. **Future Meetings**

	19:00 – 20:30	Thursday 4 th May 2017
NEW	AGM	Sunday 7 th May 2017
	19:00 – 20:30	Thursday 20 th July 2017
	19:00 – 20:30	Thursday 19 th October 2017
NEW	19:00 – 20:30	Thursday 22 nd February 2018
NEW	AGM	Sunday 6 th May 2018

17. **Final Prayer**

The meeting closed with a prayer.