

## Parish In Council meeting

8<sup>th</sup> October 2017

1. The meeting began with a prayer.

2. Welcome and introduction

Fr Pat thanked everybody present for their attendance. Notes from previous meetings were shared and various points raised throughout the meeting as a reference point for moving forward.

3. Parish Mission

- We have not had a mission in the parish for some time. St Anselm's Parish held a mission last year and earlier this year.

**Action: If anyone has ideas for how a mission could be arranged, please let Fr Pat know.**

4. Pastoral Team

- We need to develop a pastoral team within the parish. The Legion of Mary came from Malta to the parish in July. They knocked on doors and were bold in doing so. Fr Pat presented their report.
- They visited 1402 homes in one week; 57 catholic families
- They were keen to recruit and found 21 prospective legionaries after masses. To date, none of these 21 have come forward to Fr Pat.
- As a parish, we need to engage children and young families; to find situations where we can engage these people. There are a number of young parents who have moved in to the new housing developments in the areas. This has led to an increase in mass attendance.

**Action: Fr Pat is seeking 1 or 2 people committed to leading a pastoral team.**

5. Ecumenical services

- Mike Dale reported that these are currently non-existent. Sadly, the Churches together in Dartford had a demise 5 or 6 years ago.

6. Children's Liturgy

- Altar servers are currently needing some support. Servers are needing to be trained: to be reverent, to be faithful and to respond.
- Youngsters do not seem to be very keen to join at the moment.
- Fr Pat thanked Edith Ranson for taking care of the vestments.

**Action: Fr Pat is looking for someone who can take responsibility to lead the altar servers.**

7. Retreat for Ministers of the Eucharist

- We need to recruit more people for this ministry.
- There has not been a retreat for some years.
- The hospital is well served by Fr Pat, Sister, Mike and Michael.
- Fr Pat thanked the Filipino community for their help and support with the community.

**Action: if people have any ideas for a retreat, please let Fr Pat know**

8. Welcome Team

- There is not currently a welcome team in the parish.
- Fr Pat has signed a number of visa applications etc.
- Fr Pat stated that we are blessed in this parish with migrants and spoke of enculturation.

## 9. Sacraments

- In March, the Bishop will be in the parish for the Confirmation. There are currently 40 candidates for this sacrament.
- There are 50 candidates for First Holy Communion

## 10. Parish Centre

- Maintenance work has been carried out: fire door replacement; floor repairs; outside lighting.
- The front door remains a problem and is subject to vandalism.
- Cost of maintenance so far I close to £4000.
- Next planned maintenance is to replace the top windows as the winder system is broken.

## 11. Church maintenance

- The boiler is currently being replaced. Costing £7460. The heating has been in place since the church was built.
- Parishioners were told not to worry. The parish has the money as we have been prudent.
- Windows in the church need to be repaired. If we can repair them ourselves first, we will.

## 12. School

Mrs White provided an update from the school.

- Admissions:
  - the school is full and there are long waiting lists for all year groups.
  - Admissions across the area seems to be showing that parents are not always choosing a school because it is catholic but because it is close to their home.
- Recruitment
  - Catholic teacher recruitment remains a challenge
- School roof
  - The school has received a grant to cover 90% of the cost to replace/ repair the roof.
  - Total cost is £206,000 but the school must contribute 10% which is £20,600
  - Fr Pat has agreed to help raise as much money as he can and has offered that the profits from the parish bazaar also be donated to the project.
  - Dave and Carol Quinn have offered to run a number of fundraising events to help.
  - To date the school has received donations of £2000.
  - Mrs White expressed her thanks to Fr Pat and Dave and Carol for their generosity.
- Mrs White was grateful for the very strong parish/ school relationship that exists. She thanked Fr Pat, the governors, staff and parishioners for their prayers and support.
- Fr Pat thanked Mrs White and the staff for the work they do in difficult and challenging times.
- Fr Pat had been in contact with Adrian Radford at the Diocese to discuss the possibility of the parish lending the school any balance outstanding after the fundraising projects for the school roof.

## 13. Engaging Young families

- We need to find ways to reach out to families.
- In the past there has been a mother and toddler group. We have also tried to apply for a nursery in the parish but were unsuccessful.
- We are trying to keep young people under the umbrella of the church through: First Holy Communion and confirmation; Junior Club, and Senior Club. The clubs are nothing 'overly religious' but more of a 'connection' which will stay with the children for the rest of their lives.

- Fr Pat asked those present for ideas of how to engage young families. Is a coffee morning feasible? A football league for youngsters was popular in the past. 'Messy Church' or similar could appeal to parents and children of pre-school age.
- Some of those present expressed a willingness to be involved in organising a 'one-off' event to see if it engages parent and then it could be built upon, based on parental feedback. There was a feeling that people may not be able to commit initially as a weekly event but would be willing to come together in the first instance to set it up.

**Action: Anyone willing to take these ideas on board, please contact Fr Pat**

#### 14. Peru

- Florence Usher was congratulated on completing her marathon and raising £1000
- Over the year the parish has raised approximately £5000
- At the present time, it is not known whether the parish will be collecting toys for Peru.

#### 15. Transport and Volunteers

- Senior parishioners meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month. They recently enjoyed a trip to Rochester.

**Action: we need people who would be happy to visit senior parishioners in their homes after a period of 'befriending' in the Parish.**

#### 16. Knights of St Columba

- 8 people in the parish are Knights. They would like to recruit but this is proving difficult. At the moment the knights are not covering St Anselm's Parish.
- Music Night organised for 24<sup>th</sup> November – raising funds for the House of mercy
- Quiz night planned for the Spring

**Action: suggestions for how to develop recruitment to the knights is welcomed**

#### 17. Parish Census

- We have never been able to crack this!

**Action: if anyone thinks that they can help, please let Fr Pat know**

#### 18. Gift Aid

- Gerry Mogg explained the scheme
- The annual appeal in May attracted many new recruits. There are currently 130-140 people signed up.
- The 5 year audit is due. This will not be a problem as things are well managed within the parish.
- Income from the scheme amounts to approximately £9000
- There are options for 'cashless' donations and this can be arranged with Fr Pat
- Fr Pat thanked Gerry for his work in this area.

**Action: emphasise 'cashless' option for donations at the next appeal.**

#### 19. Music

- Fr Pat put forward a suggestion the possibility of the Filipino and African choirs coming together for a mass every quarter or twice a year.
- Mike suggested that this might cause a problem with getting together to rehearse
- It was suggested that maybe each choir could take responsibility for a different section of the mass to ease the pressure on rehearsal.

- Another suggestion was that after the bazaar/ fete may provide an opportunity for rehearsals and masses.
- A parishioner recalled how the 'Songs of Praise' event was successful in bringing groups together some years ago.

**Action: if anyone has any suggestions on how groups coming together for mass might become a reality, please contact Fr Pat.**

## 20. Any Other Business

At this point, other parish activity was discussed and updates provided

- Medjugorje prayer groups meets on Mondays
- Lent talks for next year are in the planning stage
- Catechesis – Fr Pat addresses this as it is needed
- First Holy Communion – a 2 year course. Bible Club takes place in the school for the first year. Daunna Kendall runs the preparation for first Reconciliation and Eucharist
- Church Flowers – a parishioner commented on how lovely the flowers look
- Parish newsletters – these are also circulated to the school
- Pastoral team – there are some people from the previous pastoral team who may be willing to continue
- Church grounds – people have contacted Fr Pat to help with maintaining the grounds/ gardening
- Ann, Tina and Rita were thanked for providing a lovely lunch today
- Fr Pat thanked Tom Hoey for all that he does to help

Fr Pat thanked everyone for their attendance. The meeting concluded with a song from Mr Ballungay.