

**PARISH OF ST JOSEPH & ST MARGARET CLITHEROW, BRACKNELL**

**MINUTES OF PPC MEETING**

**Wednesday 14 June 2017 at 7.15pm in the Church Hall**

*Present: Bernadette Fisher (Chair) Fr Danny McAvoy, Peter Hancock, Shaun Howard, Mary McNab, Marion McGuire, Liz Fisher, Paula Read, Stephen Scott*

*Apologies: Maura Holt, Claudia Wing*

- 1. Prayer and formation – Fr Danny**
- 2. Brief update of key activities and developments**

**2.1. Education and Formation**

Email update from Claudia:

**First Holy Communion**

The FHC masses will take place on Saturday 24th June 12pm and Sunday 25th June 1pm. The team have done a great job at preparing the children (and parents) in the FHC journey and we look forward to celebrating this wonderful event. A note has gone out to Eucharistic Ministers for volunteers to help at these masses as at present, we are still a couple short.

**Children's Liturgy**

Children's Liturgy recommenced at the weekend masses of 10th/11th June. A meeting was arranged for all volunteers a couple of weeks earlier to explain the process and this was well attended. It was clear that the majority had not yet all had their DBS through or done their safeguarding training. We re-iterated that until this was done we would not be able to have them in their volunteer capacity and thereby helping us with the safeguarding ratios. Marion has kindly agreed to lead specific training sessions in the parish on 8th July (both full and refresher child safeguarding training) and we are hoping this will catch the majority whose training is still outstanding.

Sarah Birch, Ann Burke and myself are meeting weekly to enter all the registrations into a database in the parish office and issue membership cards for those families wishing to attend CL. Thank you to Mary who is helping us download all the applications that have come through. We expect this workload to decline once the majority have registered. The plan is for 10.30 CL to run on a weekly basis and for the 6pm and 8.30 sessions to take place on alternate weeks until sufficient new volunteers are in place.

**Youth Group**

The adult and youth leaders met on 27th May for a review of how the Youth Group was operating vs expectations, and also to discuss how things could be adapted and improved. The youth attending the sessions is a lot younger than had been originally targeted/expected. This has posed some challenges in terms of integrating the older and younger members to ensure they are all engaged with the activities.

There has also been a struggle to get volunteers to use the formal rota system that was put in place, which has resulted in concern ahead of sessions that we would not

have sufficient trained/DBS adults present (although in the end we always managed to have sufficient volunteers present after an appeal went out for extra helpers a few days before).

There was also acknowledgement that more structured planning and pre-work had to be done in advance so that leaders/helpers were prepared and “owning” the sessions, and the attendees would be sufficiently engaged and occupied.

Finally, there was a very productive discussion around the purpose of the sessions and the importance of weaving in a more spiritual focus, but still leaving in sufficient time for the social element too. Going forwards a new structure was agreed around how this would be implemented. Last week was the first time we were trialling this new format and no doubt we will discuss this further at the next Edu & Form meeting.

There was also acknowledgement that weekly sessions may be too difficult to deliver bearing in mind the number of volunteers and planning involved. Ken and the team have agreed on 2 youth group sessions per month (2nd and 4th Friday) and this will be communicated to attendees.

### **RCIA**

The programme ended with a wonderful retreat arranged by the Parish at Wisdom House in Romsey - a really enjoyable day was had by both the team and candidates. A big thank you to Louise Birley and the rest of the RCIA team for leading a very engaging and successful RCIA programme.

Shaun added that the RCIA team will continue to meet during June to plan for next year, resuming again in September if we have any enquirers. We are in need of more team members and in particular a second co-leader.

## **2.2. The Contemplative Life – See Minutes from meeting held on 26 April 2017**

### **2.3. New Evangelisation -**

While continuing to maintain the current parish framework and work streams i.e. the PPC, the Finance Team, the other groups in the parish, Fr. Danny indicated that he would like to create a new Senior Leadership Team, comprising 4 people. This team would have New Evangelisation as their top priority and focus on establishing supportive local hubs of parishioners, willing to invite each other into their homes to pray and find new ways to evangelise. A level of education and formation for the whole parish around this will be necessary. Fr. Danny would like this to be a core focus for the next year.

## **3. Setup of a new Health and Safety Team**

Report from Liz:

The Diocesan Fire Assessor, Stephen Short, undertook an extensive Fire Risk Assessment of site of St Joseph & St Margaret Clitherow Church on 20 October 2016.

The 19 page report contained a Significant Findings Remedy Action Plan which had 7 high priority (HP) issues for our site which required action as immediate as possible, i.e.:

Smoke Detectors, Break glass call points, monthly emergency lighting checks, fire safety training, possible asbestos in boiler room, fire stopping material around pipework through walls and storage of materials in electrical switchgear cupboard.

Liz immediately actioned “storage of materials in electrical switchgear cupboard” which were relocated, so now we now have just 6 HP issues outstanding. The smoke detectors and break glass points will be addressed when the fire alarm is installed. Liz also obtained the latest site Asbestos Report.

In agreement with Fr Danny, Liz has started up a Health and Safety Group in the parish and the volunteers who responded to the newsletter item were Bernie Powell, Ralph D’Souza, Rita McNicholas-Gumm. She called all the volunteers to a complete site visit especially referencing the 6 HP issues so that everyone was fully informed of the work to be done over the next few months. We now have two more members, Tony Gunning and Graham Taylor, who will also have a complete site visit.

Rita and Liz attended an excellent Diocesan Safety Training Course on 20 May in Basingstoke which gave them confidence and knowledge with regard to H&S for our parish.

A member of the Bracknell Fire Brigade was invited to our site to give guidance with regard to the pending priorities and anything else that we can do to improve the safety of our parishioners and guests. This was an extremely informative meeting especially for evacuation, assembly points, crowd control, fire wardens, and other important areas to advance our compliance.

We will have Diocesan Health & Safety inspection over the next few months, so we have to be seen to be working on our priorities.

We have also identified other issues for action, i.e., First Aiders, Fire Wardens – and their training, assembly points, upgrading the first aid kits and possibly purchasing an AED (Automated External Defibrillator). We will be asking parishioners to volunteer as first aiders and fire wardens, if they have had training at work then they will be covered for our parish. Obviously, new actions will be identified as we evolve.

Most of the 6 HP issues can be addressed during the refurbishment of the site. The Finance Committee have given their full support for the work of the H&S group, for which we are most grateful.

We have a lot of work to do, we will need the support and patience of parishioners and we will do our best to make this site as safe as possible.

#### **4. Updated Parish Booklet**

Bernadette presented the group with the revamped Parish Booklet. Everyone agreed that it was a beautiful piece of work. Some initial suggestions for improvement before a print run:

- ) Fr. Danny to write a piece as pastor as well as a section on New Evangelisation which should get priority of place at the front of the booklet.
- ) Marion to write a piece on Safeguarding.
- ) Liz to write a piece on Health and Safety.
- ) Suggestion to have one page summarising all the contact names for each group making future amendments easier.

) Everyone to review the booklet and email Bernadette/Mary with their input.

## 5. Weekly Offerings

Peter made 4 points:

1. Traditionally, to date, the money given in the Offertory has been deemed as money that supports the day to day work of the parish including paying the bills. Under Canon Law, the first thing that the money in a parish should be used for is to help the poor and needy but most people are unaware of this. Our parishioners are extremely generous when it comes to emergency appeals and our Lenten appeal each year. But generally, it is the same people contributing to these appeals and in terms of the weekly offering, 10% of the people are giving 90% of what is collected. We need a level of formation to educate our parishioners on what we want to do, what New Evangelisation means, what it's going to cost and how we're going to get enough money to pay for all the things we want to do as well as continuing to pay our electricity bill and council tax etc.
2. On a business as usual basis, we just about break even or make a small loss because our income is static but our costs are slowly increasing. Our biggest two costs are the Diocesan Levy and our staff costs.
3. We're half way through the Diocesan Living our Faith Appeal (2.5 out of 5 years) and asking those same people to contribute more into their weekly offering is going to be difficult.
4. Despite all that, there hasn't been a time when somebody or a group has asked for something and it's been rejected because we want to see more parish activities and we always find the money to do it. But as we want to do more and more, we need to educate our parishioners about how the money is spent before encouraging them to give more and to give it from the heart.

It was agreed that we must be more transparent and make information available to the parish about exactly where their offering is being spent and outline the process involved, especially in relation to increasing personal regular contributions and Gift Aid implications. Peter and Steve to consider this further with the Finance Team.

## 6. Feedback on Guest Speakers

We have had two guest speakers this year: one from the Medaille Trust (Sharon Westby) and one from Catholic Voices (Austen Ivereigh on Amoris Letitia).

Some further suggestions were:

- ) Catholic Voices is an organisation that have produced a programme called 'Reframe' and we may wish to specify topics that they can come and address
- ) Fr. Jim from Holy Trinity is an excellent speaker
- ) A speaker to follow-up on the 'Beyond the Foodbank – Tackling Poverty in Bracknell' forum
- ) Possibly Tom Donker (parishioner and member of SVP) who runs a charity in Africa for young people and another one in London.

## **7. Input for new Porch**

Planning is under way to revamp the exterior of the church – to restore and clean the front, install a staircase that leads up to the entrance and replace the wooden doors with sliding glass doors. The church will appear more inviting and welcoming, be more accessible, allow people to see what's going on inside, make them feel that they're free to come in and less reticent about entering the church if they're not regular worshippers.

Once in, the porch should be an area which enables people to connect with people, connect with God, a space of quiet and contemplation, a space of information and education, a space for social and relationship building.

Imagining the porch as a blank canvas, some initial ideas from the group about how it might look and/or what might be contained therein were::

Library of books

CD's (CAFÉ)

Music – can be calming and prayerful

Welcome signage – different languages

The existing storage room next to the hall could be converted into the church shop

Shop could contain more educational material – religious objects should be very tasteful.

Everyone is encouraged to feedback any further ideas to Mary.

## **8. Closing Prayer - Bernadette**