

SAINT PHILIP NERI PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, 22nd March 2022

The Meeting was held in the Raiswell Room at St. Joseph's

Present: Lynn Ireland (in the Chair), Andrew Collins, Father Niall Mullaley, Father Humphrey Agbim, Rev. John Birch, Sr. Catherine Bibby, Mike Flynn, Stella McGann, Andy Davies, and Graham Lysaght.

Apologies for Absence: Clare Williams, Rev. Pat Regan, Rev. Paul d'Ambrogio and Steve Goulding.

Opening Prayers "Our Father" were offered by Father Niall.

1. Minutes of the Meeting held on 18th January 2022

The minutes were approved as a correct record. Any other matters arising would be addressed elsewhere in the agenda.

2. Parish Priest's Update

Father Niall referred to the following:

- Two Penance Services would take place on Wednesday 30th March at Christ the King in Eastham and Thursday 7th April at Our Lady's in Birkenhead both at 7pm. The Choir may be needed at both **[Action: Stella to check]**
- Approval had been given by the Diocese to the installation of a new sound system at St. Joseph's. This included new lapel microphones, an ambo microphone and a 12 - channel mixer, a replacement amplifier and new loudspeakers. All of the new equipment could be installed in the Ambo together with the existing Hearing Loop amplifier, CD Player and Radio receiver for the existing handheld microphones. The loudspeakers would be moved down the Church by a bay so as to improve the sound distribution. The speakers had been ordered so the start on site should be soon. The Diocese had given approval for expenditure of £9,983.35 for the original specification. There have been a number of changes since then and Canon Niall is to discuss whether approval would be given for £10,792.14. This enables replacement of the existing handheld microphones. Without new radio microphones the cost will be £9,736.14
- The Diocesan Chrism Mass would be held at 7pm on Wednesday 13th April at St. Michael's. Canon Niall was in touch with Canon Chris

Matthews over the details and an item about this would appear in the Parish Newsletter. People were to be asked to advise the Parish Office if they planned to attend. In particular, around 10 Stewards would be needed to cover the Church and Car Parking, to be co-ordinated by Steve Goulding. The Car routes would need careful monitoring so as to make access easier and reduce the danger of accidents. The catering afterwards would be provided by SDCC. The detailed roles at the Mass were reviewed and it was noted that Deacon Gerard would be one of the two MC's. **[Action: Father Niall and Steve Goulding]**

3. Update on the Impacts of Covid 19

The current Diocesan guidance is published every week in the Newsletter. As masks were no longer a legal requirement in Church it was agreed that no signs should be put up advising that they should be worn, but supplies of masks should be available in both Churches for those that might need them. It was noted that the Holy Communion announcement would be omitted during midweek.

4. Health and Safety Issues

The building work was progressing at St. Michael's otherwise no Health and Safety matters were raised.

5. Safeguarding

There were no issues to report.

6. Strategic Vision and Objectives for the Future

The following were discussed:

- There were many other pressures and changes arising currently in the Diocese due to shortage of Priests but also Synodal issues and other related matters. Accordingly, it was agreed that the proposed "Day of Recollection" should not go ahead in Lent and that the whole situation should be further reviewed by the Council, and decisions made as to how we should now proceed.
- There had been a heart-warmingly high response from the Parish on the Synod questionnaire, which had been forwarded to the Diocese and copies kept in the office. It was expected that the Diocese would send to all Churches by Palm Sunday a summary of the responses which could be published. It was recognised that at present there was no large venue in the Parish so as to enable people to meet together to consider the issues, apart from St. Michael's School. It was agreed that more needed

to be done to get Parishioners together in Ordinary Time and possibly around the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations in June.

- Involving younger people and Schools more in Parish business. It was felt that this was a major issue at St. Joseph's but much less so at St. Michael's where many younger people turned up for Mass on Sundays and stayed for a long time afterwards. Basically, there was little involvement of children at St. Joseph's even after 1st Holy Communions and it was noted that St. Michael's school was just 50% Catholic. It would be important to give our children a role and specific jobs to do so as to involve them more.
- The Council recognised that following Covid people could get "out of the habit" of participating in Church, but that Midweek Mass attendance was good and there was a need to look forward and anticipate people's needs and to build on expectations going forward. In particular, the Parish should count our blessings and not be over critical of the current situation. These were issues to be considered in depth by the Group to be appointed by Father Niall to take forward these matters and to develop the Parish Strategy [**Action: Fr. Niall**]

7. Development of Parish Structures and Teams

The Council considered the reports back from the Teams which had met since the last meeting, as follows:

- Liturgy Team had concentrated on developing the details for the Easter Triduum which would be published in the Newsletter shortly. They had also been involved in the arrangements for the Chrism Mass, Sr. Catherine's weekly Lenten Briefings and the timings for the "Walk of Witness" at Woodchurch on Good Friday. It was understood that Gerard Boyle had been unable to gain any information on the Walk in Birkenhead on the same day.
- Finance Team had considered the reinstatement of the Collection Plates in both Churches, the costs of St. Joseph's new PA system, and had conducted a general review of the accounts.

Following the appointment of Canon Niall last September, there was a requirement to consider within 6 months the composition, membership, role and need for the Parish Council. Canon Niall was very happy with the current arrangements, and it was formally agreed that the Council should continue in its present format.

The membership and composition of the Outreach and Evangelisation Teams

was further considered, together with certain individuals who were willing to be involved but not to lead on these issues. Membership of these Teams would be dependent on the Synodal review, which Fr. Niall would take forward. It was noted that the membership of the Communications Team would be important, so as to ensure that social media and the maintenance of the Website was promoted, and that younger people would need to play a prominent role in these areas. **[Action: Fr. Niall]**

The Social Team had an important role to play, including a Parish event to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee on the following weekend of 12th June. There would also be a further Fish and Chip Supper at St. Michael's, both of which Andrew agreed to lead on **[Action: Andrew Collins]**

With regard to Premises, it was agreed that it would be important to ensure that our buildings were "fit for purpose" and that a large number of people were involved in ensuring that this was the case. There was no obvious leadership for this, and Lynn agreed to sound people out for taking this work forward **[Action: Lynn Ireland]**

A parishioner had raised questions about how individuals could raise issues for consideration by the Council, and it was agreed that this could be through a "suggestions box" at the back of both Churches, and also directly through Lynn and Mike as the convenors of meetings. Issues could be raised through contacting the Parish Office. It was also felt that occasionally Homilies at Mass could be used to inform the congregation about relevant issues. Stella would draft a note for the Newsletter about sung and ordinary Masses **[Action: Stella McGann]**

8. Other Business

- It was noted that the hearing loop at St. Michael's was not always working and it was agreed that Tony Ireland would check it out **[Action: Tony Ireland]**
- It was noted that work on the roof had commenced at the St. Joseph's Parish Centre but that no timescale had been agreed for completion at this stage.

9. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 17th May 2022 at 7.30pm in the Raiswell Room at St. Joseph's.

The meeting ended at 9.30pm.

Mike Flynn, Secretary

