

SAINT PHILIP NERI PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, 26th July 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, Steve Goulding, Sr. Catherine Bibby, Rev. Gerard Boyle, Mike Flynn, Stella McGann, Rev. Pat Regan, Andy Davies and Graham Lysaght.

Apologies for Absence: Clare Williams and Matthew Edwards.

Opening Prayers were offered by Father Niall.

1. Minutes of the Meeting held on 17th May 2022

The minutes were approved as a correct record. There were the following matters arising:

- The new microphones and sound system at St. Joseph's are working very well. There is now a lot of surplus older kit in the Church, which remained saleable.
- The hearing loop at St. Michael's is not working, but no further action is needed as the sound quality is generally acceptable. Also, the Choir cannot be heard on the livestream and this gives a strange impression of the liturgy. Their position in Church appears detached from the liturgies and requires improvement. Further mixing may be needed at St. Michael's which Steve and Graham agreed to follow up. **[Action: Steve and Graham]**
- The Prayer Spaces had now been set up in both Churches.
- There appeared to be no immediate problems with the Church roof at St. Joseph's.
- The leaflets about St. Joseph's Church had now been produced and were available at the back of Church. It is in the same format as the leaflet for St. Michael's and it was agreed that copies of both leaflets should be placed in the respective Churches **[Action: Lynn and John]**.
- It is understood that the relics of Saint Bernadette of Lourdes would now be coming in September to Shrewsbury, Chester and Birkenhead, which many parishioners would be interested in visiting. Further information on the options would be set out in the Newsletter **[Action: Graham]**.

2. Parish Priest's Update

Father Niall referred to the following:

- An important update on his personal position. He said that it was always envisaged that his role would expand, but he did not think that it would happen as quickly as it did! He had become Acting Dean of Birkenhead & East Wirral Deanery before Christmas. Now, as other Deaneries were in a similar position due to moves and Clergy sickness, elections to appoint new Deans would take place. Regarding changes in our area, Father Niall informed the meeting that Bishop Mark had invited a new Religious Community from Nigeria, the Holy Family Fathers and Brothers of the Youth to take on the Pastoral Care of St Anne's, St John's and St Luke's Parishes. The Parochial Administrator would be Father Mario Asuikaka, who had served in this country for the last eight years; he would be assisted by the newly ordained Father Emmanuel Chuckwujekwu who would travel over from Nigeria soon. This change would involve Father Niall in a mentoring role.
- In addition, Fr. Niall had been elected as the Chair of the Diocesan Council of Priests and he remained on the Diocesan Board of Finance & Administration. His Chaplaincy role to the Irish Travelling Community had come up with him when he moved to Birkenhead, and was expanding. As Acting Dean he had been involved in discussions with the Diocese and the Syro-Malabar Community about expanding their ministry and possibly appointing a Priest to serve the Wirral.
- This time of change, and widening of responsibilities was an opportunity, both in our area and wider Diocese, to seek new opportunities to reflect on how we could share with, and support each other in discerning the way forward.
- Father Bernard Forshaw had now left St. Joseph's, and was living in a family home in Bromborough where he could have some involvement Christ the King Parish there.
- Father Michael Coughlan from Our Lady's had produced a detailed list of Opportunities for Faith Development in 2022/23, which was circulated to the Council. Details of this and how the Parish could best respond would be set out in due course on the Website **[Action: Fr. Niall/Steve]**.
- Work is proceeding well in the Parish Centre at St. Joseph's despite asbestos being found in the roof, which is being dealt with. Fr Niall was in touch with the Shrewsbury Diocesan Commercial Company (SDCC)

and the Diocesan Finance Office and is in discussion about hopefully reopening in September or early autumn. Ways are still being considered as to how we could better use the Parish Centre for Parish and Community events whilst maintaining the commercial ventures. Further details would be provided soon in the Parish Newsletter **[Action: Fr. Niall]**.

- It was noted that Clare Williams is now working full time for the Shrewsbury Youth Mission Team and no longer employed by St. Philip Neri Parish. Therefore she would no longer serve on the Parish Council. **[Action: Mike]**.
- Father Niall spoke about the 'Digital Collection Plate' or 'DONA' System that had been trialled, with some success in a few parishes. This allowed donations to be made by card, and 'contactless' donations. Father Niall had spoken to the Parish Finance Team, who were interested in developing the idea, hence it was brought to the Parish Council. Father Niall would find out more details and let us know how this could be implemented. **[Action: Fr. Niall]**.
- The Old Presbytery at St. Michael's is now vacant, although it was increasingly being used by various Groups so the Health and Safety assessments remained important. A lot of surplus equipment and Youth Team gear had been left so clearance remained an important issue for the Premises Team. This should also be included as an agenda item for the next meeting. **[Action: Premises Team/Graham/Mike]**.

3. Health and Safety Issues

A Health and Safety Audit has been carried out at St. Michael's and this has resulted in more work needing to be undertaken to ensure compliance with the Diocesan systems. In particular, nothing should be stored in the Boiler Room, which remains the most likely source of any fire, and accordingly there is very little storage space at the Church and Presbytery. The Diocesan Report was awaited before any further decisions at St. Michael's **[Action: Steve]**.

4. Safeguarding

There had been much training for the Clergy and safeguarding representatives recently, as provided by the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA), with one further module for the Clergy to come. Accordingly, these issues are receiving a higher profile and our policies may need further updating. It was noted that both Churches had appointed Safeguarding representatives which was very helpful. With regards to the detail, it was thought that:

- There should be a “day diary” to identify individuals who come into premises outside Mass times;
- An appropriate policy should be developed for our Sacristies, and we also needed an update for lists of key holders. This would need to be considered further at the next Clergy Group Meeting [**Action: Fr. Niall**];
- Individuals’ personal telephone numbers and other contact details should not be shown in the Newsletter; and
- Consideration should be given to the installation of a handrail at the Ambo of St. Joseph’s to assist the more disabled.
- Whilst many individuals had DBS Certificates with their work for other organisations, anyone carrying out a role in our Parish would need a specific one for the Parish, with copies kept in the Parish Office. A review needs to be carried out to identify who holds current DBS Certificates as we move towards restoring many Parish activities after the removal of Pandemic Regulations. [**Action: Marie Fisher/Mairie Gelling/Jane Edwards**].

5. Strategic Vision and Objectives for the Future

As recorded above, there were many other pressures and changes arising currently in the Diocese due to reductions in Clergy. This was causing us all to review the vision for our Parishes and areas, but it was important to “celebrate who we are” in developing the Parish Strategy. A Mission and a Vision were both essential to guiding our future direction and being able to share and communicate via our Parish structures was essential.

It had been agreed that Fr. Niall would convene a Steering Group to get these issues moving. In addition, it was suggested that perhaps two people from each Mass should be included, together with representatives from the Stewards. It was agreed that names should be advised to Fr. Niall to help him to convene an appropriate Group. [**Action: All**].

6. Development of Parish Structures and Teams

The Council considered the arrangements for the Teams which were now due to meet as follows:

- The Liturgy Team would meet on 2nd August at 7.30pm at St. Joseph’s under the Chairmanship of Stella McGann;

- The Premises Team would meet at St. Michael's at 2pm on Saturday 13th August. It was acknowledged that this Team would have a major task to fulfil in recycling much redundant material and waste **[Action: Lynn Ireland.**

7. Other Business

There was no other business.

8. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 20th September 2022 at 7.30pm in the Raiswell Room at St. Joseph's.

The meeting ended at 9.45pm.

Mike Flynn, Secretary