

ST MARY'S WOOLHAMPTON PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting 18th March 2009

Present: Fr Benedict, Joanna Harrison (chair), GERALYN COLLINS, Tom Huelin, Barbara Jones, Kate Burke,

Sandra Brewester (Guest speaker) was welcomed to the meeting

1. The meeting opened with prayer

2. **Apologies** were received from Sean Murphy, Paul Paniccia, Marc Servais and Sarah Chaudoir

3. **The minutes of the previous** meeting were approved as a true account of the proceedings.

4. Matters Arising & Review of Actions

(a) New PPC Members – The meeting was informed that Burghfield's next Church Committee meeting will take place on 2nd April – it is hoped that a new nominee will be identified at this meeting and be appointed to the PPC.

ACTION: Fr Benedict

(b) There was a suggestion that the Chairperson from each of the Church Committees be invited to attend the PPC. It was recognised that this may not be possible for each of the Committee Chairs but it could be explored.

ACTION: PPC members

(c) Day of Recollection to be held at Douai on Saturday 13th June. Fr Paul King will lead the day which will commence at 10am – Mass will be celebrated at 3pm and the day to conclude around 4pm

- The cost will be £12.00 per person – cheques to be made payable to Douai Abbey Parish and lunch will be provided.
- Ten people have confirmed their attendance. Each church was asked to invite Committee members
- Any special dietary needs should be made known at the time of booking.
- Confirmation of final numbers MUST be available by the next PPC meeting.

ACTION: PPC Representatives from each church for the first four items and Jo to contact Brother Christopher to book St Mary's for 3pm Mass and to advise Fr Paul to bring his own alb.

(d) Penitential Service at St Joseph's Newbury will take place at 8pm on Monday 6th April – notice to go in the bulletin.

ACTION: Fr Benedict

(e) Pastoral Area Ecumenical Representative – a person from Theale had expressed an interest but on learning more about what is involved felt this is not a role they wished to pursue. Liz Keller has been informed. An alternative nomination is being sought.

ACTION: Jo Harrison

5. Where are we in the process of the Pastoral Area becoming a single?

Parish? On March 6th Bishop Crispian Hollis, Msgr John Nelson and Nicky Stevens, Met with the Pastoral Area Pastoral Council. The Bishop spoke for approximately 12 minutes. His message was one of encouragement and he stated that he was not wishing to dictate the way forward but to begin a conversation. He assured the assembly that he did not desire to close any of our Pastoral Area churches and that if this should be indicated in the future; it is his hope that such a move would be the collective decision of the PAPC. It was acknowledged that change can be unsettling and that all churches are not moving at the same speed in embracing this initiative. St. Mary's (Woolhampton) was held up as a model at the Diocesan Assembly in 2005 for other areas of the diocese to follow and Fr Benedict was commended on the continuing progress made within the four Douai served churches. It was recognised that ours is the only Pastoral Area to have brought all its churches together and the Pastoral Area celebration held at Douai on 29th June 2008 was applauded as an example of the type of growth and collaboration to which the Bishop hopes all churches in other PAPC's will aspire. One of the remaining concerns for our area is that a Pastoral Coordinator has not yet emerged, whilst there is still much work to be achieved, a positive start had been made.

6. Formulation of Verbal Communication to the Church Communities

It was agreed that the following statement would be communicated at Masses on the weekend 28th/29th March

- The Bishop anticipates no significant changes in our Pastoral area and is keen for our Pastoral Area Pastoral Council to determine its own decisions.
- Bishop Crispian was especially pleased with the Pastoral area collaboration and sited the celebration held at Douai on 29th June 2008 as an example.
- Fr Benedict was singled out for commendation for his achievement in bringing the four churches served by Douai together.

7. Election of Chairman and Secretary

- Paul Paniccia's tremendous contribution to the PPC and his role as Secretary was recognised and a vote of thanks was given in his absence. It was agreed that a letter of appreciation would be sent to him.

ACTION: Fr Benedict

- The Offices of Chair and Secretary were considered and discussed. Jo Harrison will remain Chair for a further year and Kate Burke agreed to become Secretary.

8. Friday Self Denial: Sandra gave an illuminating and compelling address on the practical and spiritual benefits of the Friday Self-denial scheme, which has two core aims.

- (i) To appreciate how materially fortunate we are and identify with those who are not
- (ii) To share our good fortune with others.

How the scheme works: Essentially, by individuals making small acts of self-denial. It is an envelope scheme, which works by individuals placing their donation in an envelope and putting it in the first collection each week. The confidentiality of the system was emphasised with only the *Gift Aid* coordinator being aware of the actual amount individually donated. Where possible, a Gift Aid certificate is signed in order to reclaim tax. St Bernadette's have been involved since 1996, St Luke's joined soon after and St Oswald's in 2007. St Mary's made a specific donation to the scheme and are interested in looking at it in more detail. To date, the recipients have been third world countries. The scheme has raised over £20k and brought enormous benefit and relief to the recipients whose lives and opportunities have been enhanced by this small act of self-denial. Our individual commitment has collectively made a real difference. Each year the scheme runs from the first Sunday in Advent until the feast of Christ the King. The parish finances the envelopes and there are no meetings to be attended!

Geralyn's support was acknowledged and Sandra was invited to explain the scheme to St Mary's; it was agreed that Sandra would liaise with Tim Woods to arrange a mutually convenient day when she could attend Mass at St Mary's.

It was noted that the Gift Aid scheme would be raised in each of our churches on Sunday 22nd March.

Sandra was thanked for her most enthusiastic and inspiring talk.

ACTION: Sandra to contact Tim Woods. PPC to share with Committees and wider church

9. Any Other Business

(i) A cake and plant sale will take place between the 9am and 11am Masses on Sunday 31st May at St Mary's (from 10 –11am). All members of the parish are welcome and if anyone feels able to contribute by provision of produce or assisting on

the day, please contact Geralyn Collins on 0118 971 3189. .

ACTION: PPC members to publicise this event in their churches.

(ii) A charity concert is being arranged by St Mary's early in December – advance notice – all are welcome; more details will be made available nearer the time.

(iii) First Holy Communion will be celebrated at St Mary's on 14th June.

(iv) Fr Benedict requested names of all people who are involved with Children's Liturgy, as soon as possible.

ACTION: PPC members to liaise with Committee Chairs

(v) First Holy Communion will be celebrated at St Bernadette's on 21st June.

(vi) Marc Servais is still working on the Parish *Facebook*.

(vii) The point was raised that since the disbandment of the roving repository, there is no easy access to purchase religious objects and gifts suitable for children's

sacramental celebrations. It was suggested that the CTS and St Paul's bookshop could be accessed via the Internet. It was also proposed that GERALYN should contact Fr Gervase to explore the feasibility of purchasing items suitable for children on sale or return that could be available via the Abbey.

ACTION: GERALYN COLLINS.

(viii) Several parishioners had expressed sadness and disappointment that there is no penitential service in our parish during Lent. There were only 37 participants at last year's penitential service and it had not been considered viable this year. There is a penitential service in our wider pastoral area at St Joseph's Newbury, as had been discussed earlier in the meeting. Details of other local services at English Martyrs and St Joseph's Tilehurst will be made available to each of our churches when they are known (not yet up on their parish websites)

(ix) Emergency telephone numbers for a priest. The protocol for first point of contact and what to do if a priest from our community is not available was discussed and the names and telephone numbers noted. It was agreed that these notices should be printed and displayed at the back of each church.

ACTION: KATE BURKE

10. Date and subject of next meeting:

Wednesday 29th April at 7.30pm. Discussion topic ***Bidding Prayers (please note change of date)***

Dates were agreed for future meetings as follows:

May 20th (Discussion topic - SVP)

June 17th (Discussion topic - *Stewardship*)

11. The meeting closed with prayer.

Chair.....

Secretary.....

Date.....