

ST MARY'S WOOLHAMPTON PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting 15th October 2008

Present: Fr. Benedict, Sandra Brewester, Kate Burke, GERALYN COLLINS, Joanna Harrison (chair), Sean Murphy, Paul Paniccia, Midge Robinson, Annalisa Webb.

1. Apologies

Apologies received from Niki Bhamra, Tom Huelin, Barbara Jones.

Midge Robinson from Burghfield deputised for Niki Bhamra.

2. The meeting opened with prayer

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

4. Matters Arising

Concern was expressed that names from the church committees for nomination to the PPC had not been forthcoming to date. Efforts are to be redoubled to provide at least two, preferably three, names to the parish priest by the end of October in order that some of the current members can retire at the beginning of 2009.

Action: Church committees

5. Formulation of Verbal Communication to the Church Communities

The following was formulated to be communicated on the weekend 25th/26th October:

There are 21 candidates preparing to make their first holy communion in 2009.

A parish support group for parents and grandparents is planned for early 2009. Meetings will be of an informal nature exploring issues of Catholic faith to address the needs of those involved in passing on the faith to children. The Pastoral Council will be finalising arrangements for this group at its November meeting. Parishioners are invited to contribute ideas and comments via the suggestion box at the back of the church.

6. Review of Actions from the last meeting

None.

7. Report from Pastoral Area Pastoral Council

The PPC were apprised of the situation at Thatcham parish where the PPC had been disbanded and the parish priest had commenced a consultation process to identify new members for a reconstituted PPC. It was recommended that prayers for Thatcham parish be included in the general intercessions at Mass.

The diocesan initiative on stewardship, encouraging a broader involvement of all the faithful to use their gifts and talents in the Church, had been discussed with a view to inviting Fr. Bruce Barnes to address the pastoral area prior to setting up a pilot project in the area.

With regard to the youth, Dave Hill, diocesan adviser for youth ministry, had been invited to give a short report on youth ministry in the diocese.

Costs of the pastoral area celebration day in June have been finalised resulting in a charge of £440 to each parish.

Discussions had taken place in the PAPC on a follow-up to the day of celebration. This had focussed on organising a 'Week of Accompanied Prayer' sponsored by the Spirituality Development Group within the diocese. It entails participants committing themselves to half-an-hour of prayer each day linked to a daily individual consultation with a guide for a week. The director would be Fr. Paul King whose only availability is the week commencing 15th March 2009. The cost to participants would be about £40 per person. Questions were raised at the PPC about appropriate facilities in the pastoral area for the individual consultations as well as accommodation for the guides during the week. Although Douai would be a suitable venue its facilities are normally fully booked during the season of Lent, so the proposed date is too close to make this a viable option. If a single centre was identified the geography of the pastoral area needed to be taken into account as daily travel for the one-to-one consultation would increase the daily time commitment that participants have to make during the week. It was felt that bringing people to prayer is very creditable and a good concept, but the proposal as it stands was considered too ambitious to proceed at the current time.

Another discussion had taken place on how to mark the year of St. Paul in the pastoral area. One suggestion had been to organise a course, possibly during Lent 2009, based around audio tapes featuring talks by Fr. Richard Rohr.

Links between Catholic schools and the worshipping communities in the pastoral area were considered to be very weak. There was a discussion on how to address this in the light of experience that the ethos in some schools was ambivalent towards encouraging full practice of the faith according to the mind of the Church.

The future of the Pastoral Area Liturgy Advisory Group was under discussion.

8. Day of Recollection for Members of the PPC and Church Committees

The format for the day of recollection was discussed. A guided prayer format was suggested although this was considered more suited for individuals. It was probably more likely to be a preached retreat format concluding with Mass. A response was needed from all the church committees to ascertain likely uptake.

Action: Church committees

It was agreed that preliminary arrangements should be undertaken with a view to holding the day sometime after Easter 2009 at Douai Abbey. Fr. Gervase would be contacted to ascertain availability of facilities. Fr. Paul King was nominated as a possible leader and he would be approached to enquire about his availability. If he was not able to lead Fr. Paul might be able to suggest others. **Action: Jo Harrison**

Themes considered were 'Working Together', 'Building Community', 'Service'.

Likely costs for the day would be explored with the expectation that these would be split equally between the parish and participants.

9. Any Other Business

a) The Council's attention was drawn to material issued by the diocesan Marriage and Family Life Virtual Network. It was agreed that this would be distributed with the PPC minutes. **Action: Paul Paniccia**

b) The Council was informed that the parish youth group had planned four meetings for young people in or above school year 6.

c) A question was brought to the PPC: Given that Pope Benedict has declared a year to commemorate St. Paul and a synod is currently meeting in Rome on the subject of scripture in the life of the Church, what is the parish planning to mark the year of St. Paul and encourage parishioners to become more familiar with scripture?

It was judged that any sessions arranged in the parish to address this question or any other aspect of faith would not attract sufficient interest to make them viable. The idea of a parish pilgrimage during 2009 to places in Rome or Turkey associated with St. Paul was felt to be more attractive. It was agreed to explore this as the main agenda item at the December meeting of the PPC.

The Next Meeting will be on Thursday 20th November 2008 at Douai Abbey when the main item for consideration will be to discuss arrangements for the parent/grandparent support group.

Future dates for meeting, subject to confirmation:

Wednesday 10th December 2008

The meeting closed with prayer.

Chair.....

Secretary.....

Date.....