

St Joseph & the English Martyrs, Bishop's Stortford

PPC 'Not the New Year' Gathering

Saturday, 13th January 2018 7-8.30pm in the Parish Centre



Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) - Looking back, looking forward

There are many visible signs of the progress made in nurturing the fabric of our beautiful church. It has benefited from the input of skilled craftsmen who have made it a fitting place for the spiritual worship of our growing parish community. As the town continues to develop we must consider how best to welcome and serve both newcomers and existing parishioners to strengthen our community while deepening our faith. It is a shared challenge as we all share responsibility for our continuing growth as a community encompassing the three churches within the Bishop's Stortford parish. Parish wide sacramental preparation for RCIA and confirmation, allied with social events such as our popular Justice and Peace lunches and parish walks, intended for all, offer the chance for us to draw together.

The PPC fulfils a consultative role, as set out in Canon Law. Together with the Parish Finance Committee (PFC) it seeks to find the best way to support the vision of the parish clergy to meet the needs and demands of the Parish.

Our goal of building up the dynamic **Christian community** we wish to become continues and the support and input of many across the Parish is vital. The parish benefits from the energy and commitment of so many who, through the many groups operating across the Parish, provide opportunities to meet, mix and socialise which are valuable and valued. The very well attended shared supper to mark the departure of Fr Fortunato and arrival of Fr Carlos drew participants from all three churches within the parish. Many events have been hosted by the Social Committee including a Parish Walk, Barn Dance, Wine Tasting, Autumn Lunch targeted towards older/housebound parishioners and the ever-popular summer gathering in July which evolved into a Family Fun Day. RISE Theatre company put on an alternative Christmas pantomime early in December 2016 which was very well received by those who attended.

The **focus on worship** saw the return of the Redemptorists who led a Parish retreat in October 2016 and our live streaming continues to be hugely popular within parish boundaries and beyond. Our need to serve and support all parishioners led to the provision of material and a questionnaire for parents with children attending Mass. Although responses were very limited the aim was to ensure worshippers of all ages feel welcomed. Each of us has to show consideration for others as we focus our worship on listening attentively to God's message and responding appropriately.

Our need to be **good neighbours** is at times stretched when parishioners ignore the parking instructions, breaking the conditions of our parking agreement. We only have permission to use the **parking at the back** of the church **while attending weekend masses**. We would ask that parishioners show consideration for other users as **all** parking spaces are bought by those who work in the courtyard/town council office buildings and need access to their spaces 24/7. We must ensure there is no reason for our right to access parking being withdrawn and much appreciate your co-operation in adhering to the conditions of our parking agreement.

The PPC meets regularly and if you have any issue you wish to raise please contact

Fr Peter Harris (President), Mike Bowes, Alison Jones, Vince Micallef, Bertie Napier or Marie Rhodes (Chair)