

ST BEDE'S CATHOLIC CHURCH – CROXLEY GREEN

NOTES

Parish in Council Meeting Monday 16th October 2017 – 7.30pm

PRESENT

Fr John Wiley, Louise McKenna (Chair), John Charnley, Fabian Hiscock, David Reilly, Graham Smith, Ursula Bartlett (Agenda / Minutes).

1 OPENING PRAYER

Fr John opened the meeting with a prayer.

2 APOLOGIES

Apologies received from Paul Bartlett and June Jones.

3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING – Mon 17th July 2017

Copies were made available for those present to read through.

4 MATTERS ARISING (other than items listed on the Agenda)

None.

5 FINANCIAL REPORT

David Reilly (Chair of the Finance Committee) gave his report.

The accounting information on OPAS (Online Parish Accounting System) appears to be complete up to 31st August 2017. As at that date, income exceeded expenditure by £3,522. However, there is expenditure of £1,158 included in these figures that was covered by the funds received in 2016 under Growing in Faith (the income and expenditure from Growing in Faith are known as restricted funds and are not for general use). Excluding this expenditure to give an indication of receipts and payments relating to the period to 31st August 2017 leaves a surplus of £4,680.

David explained that the Gift Aid tax reclaim of £6,274 for the year to 5th April 2017 had been received. The late claim for 2014/15 for £4,117 (see the meeting notes for the Parish in Council meeting on 17th July 2017) remains outstanding. However, Marie-Louise Van Spyk (Diocesan Planned Giving Technician) will be attending the Finance Committee meeting on 19th October 2017 and an update will be requested.

David reported that, while envelope and standing order offertories were broadly in line with budget to 31st August 2017, loose plate collections were £697 ahead of the budgeted figure of £4,139. While Fr John noted that Gift Aid claims are possible on loose plate donations of up to £8,000 a year at present, David said that loose plate donations would be close to this limit at the current rate and that it could be worth encouraging parishioners donating in this way to move to envelopes or, better still, standing orders. This was agreed.

David advised us that he had amended the simple budget on OPAS (based on the figures for 2016, but excluding restricted funds) to take account of the fact that the Diocesan assessment for 2017 was some £340 less a month than in 2016. The budgeted surplus for the period, which excludes the figure of £1,158 above, is £3,157, giving a positive actual variance of £1,523.

The bank balance at 31st August 2017 was £30,661. David noted that, while this appears 'healthy', it could be reduced to below zero if major work were needed. It was noted that work on the central heating system (see below) could fall into this category unless there was an appeal or a loan was taken out.

Cost of First Holy Communion / Confirmation Preparation Classes

The Finance Committee will be discussing the charges for these preparation classes at its next meeting, and a report will be given at the next Parish in Council Meeting.

6 PROPERTY & GROUNDS MAINTENANCE UPDATE

Central Heating in Church and Sacristy

We have previously discussed the replacement of the current heating system, which is failing. Currently, 2 of the heaters in the church are not working. We have received one estimate for a replacement system, at a cost of approximately £25000. We are awaiting two other estimates.

We agreed that we could launch an appeal to help with the cost as part of our 60th Anniversary activities in 2018.

Replacement of Toilet & Basin in Presbytery Lobby

The toilet in the Presbytery lobby has not functioned correctly for some while, and the whole cloakroom area looks rather shabby. Ursula reported that a local tradesman has given a verbal estimate of approximately £500 to replace the toilet and basin, and re-tile as necessary. It was agreed that this was reasonable, and we will go ahead with this improvement.

Proposed Replacement of Floor Polisher

Fabian advised us that the floor polisher, used for cleaning the parquet flooring in the Church and Sacristy, is unsatisfactory. Although only three years old, the casing comes apart too easily, and it is not easy to operate safely. It was agreed that for Health & Safety reasons we should replace this. Fabian will source a suitable replacement.

7 FR JOHN'S REPORT

Fr John reported that the congregation numbers are stable and that we have 10 applications for First Holy Communion 2018 so far. He advised us that various improvement and remedial works are going well.

There was some discussion regarding the use of Mass Attendance Record cards for children who wish to make their First Holy Communion or request Fr John to confirm their attendance for secondary transfer purposes. Fr John indicated that he felt this could be beneficial.

8 SAFEGUARDING

Ursula advised us that she is in the process of dealing with a number of DBS applications. As a result of the Volunteer Appeal Weekend we have 4 people who are willing to assist in a Catechist support role.

We need to continue to raise the profile of Safeguarding in the parish, and regular Safeguarding items are appearing in the weekly Newsletter.

9 PAST EVENTS

Parish Volunteer Appeal Weekend

This was a very successful appeal, and 21 people entered their names on the volunteer sheets; offering to get involved in a variety of different roles. Three excellent presentations were given at the Masses during the previous weekend, and thanks were expressed to Fabian for his guidance notes.

New Eucharistic Ministers

We have 3 volunteers wishing to become Eucharistic Ministers, so will need to involve them in some way as soon as possible. Ursula will contact Mary Crowley at the Diocese for some guidance, but it was suggested that Fr John should arrange a meeting – maybe during Advent, to introduce these new volunteers to the existing Eucharistic Ministers.

Recruiting Altar Servers

We still have no new Altar Servers. Ursula agreed to place an appeal in the Newsletter.

Catechists Meeting with Mary Crowley

This recent meeting was a great success. It served to encourage the existing Catechists, and introduce the new volunteers to this role. The enthusiasm created was invaluable.

10 FORTHCOMING EVENTS

60th Anniversary Events – 2018

We have already agreed the date for our Mass of Thanksgiving – Sunday 16th September 2018 at 6pm.

Ursula advised us that Bishop Paul McAleenan has accepted our invitation to attend. She also invited Cardinal Vincent Nichols, but he declined as he will be abroad at a conference at that time. The Cardinal has, however, sent his good wishes for a successful event.

We intend to launch a project to replace the central heating in the church, and various other ideas were mentioned. We agreed to form a working party to organise the various events throughout 2018. Ursula will put an appeal for help in the Newsletter. Louise, Fabian and Ursula expressed their willingness to help.

Adoremus – National Eucharistic Pilgrimage & Congress (Sat 8th Sept 2018)

Ursula gave a short explanation about this event.

Adoremus is an initiative of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England & Wales to create a special opportunity to reflect on the centrality of the Eucharist in the life of the Church. This is the first time in modern history that the Church in England & Wales has sought to gather for a National Congress on the scale envisaged.

We don't need to provide names until the spring, but we do need to say whether we need places for the whole 3 days or just the main event on Saturday 8th Sept.

On Friday 7th Sept, there will be various presentations taking place; exploring the theme further - targeting especially those involved in catechesis and formation.

The main event takes place on Sat 8th Sept.

On Sunday 9th Sept there will be two solemn Masses in the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King (3000 will be made available on this day).

Those chosen to attend should be commissioned in their respective parishes on the Feast of Corpus Christi (details of a suitable liturgy are to be sent out to parishes in due course). They will then deliver feedback within the parish on their return from the Congress.

The cost is £40 per day, per delegate, which should be covered by parish funds.

Fair Trade Event / Coffee Morning

Ursula advised us that she has approached Eleri Davies (Methodist Church), with regard to giving a short presentation at forthcoming coffee morning, or similar event. Eleri has agreed to help, and we agreed to arrange a suitable event in the spring.

Quiz Evening

Madeline Leech has agreed to officiate at a Quiz Evening – date to be arranged. Louise will follow this up.

11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**Gate Post Signs**

John Charnley enquired about the progress with the new gate post signs.

Ursula explained that this was in hand. What began as a simple task, escalated into a mammoth project when it was discovered that the brickwork was crumbling and concealed metal supports had rusted. Chris Fanning (Diocesan Surveyor) was consulted, and a local contractor has carried out the necessary remedial work. We are now waiting for new pier caps to support the crosses at the top. The ordering process will take several weeks, and our contractor will finish the job as soon as the pier caps are received. We already have the new signs, and these will be fitted once the gate posts are fully restored.

13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING / CLOSING PRAYER

The next meeting was scheduled for Monday 29th January 2018 at 7.30pm.
Fr John closed the meeting with a prayer at 8.55pm.

Ursula Bartlett (October 2017)