

ST BEDE'S CATHOLIC CHURCH – CROXLEY GREEN

NOTES

Parish in Council Meeting Monday 30th April 2018 7.30pm

PRESENT

Fr John Wiley, Louise McKenna (Agenda / Chair), John Charnley, Michelle Hussey, June Jones, David Marston, David Reilly, Ursula Bartlett (Minutes).

1 OPENING PRAYER

Fr John opened the meeting with a prayer.

2 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Graham Smith.

3 NOTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING – Mon 29th January 2018

Copies were made available for those present to read through. These were agreed as true record.

4 MATTERS ARISING (not listed on Agenda for this meeting)

Gift from the Shanahan Family

We have received a very generous gift of a wooden garden bench, which has been engraved, in memory of the late Con & Sadie Shanahan – former long-standing parishioners of St Bede's. We have invited the family to join us on Sunday 27th May 2018, for a blessing ceremony after 10am Mass. They will also be welcome to join us in the Hall afterwards for the scheduled Parish Breakfast, to mark the Feast of St Bede.

Church Spring Clean – Saturday 28th April 2018

Thanks were expressed to all those who turned out to help with this task, and to Louise McKenna who provided a splendid lunch.

Replacement of Floor Polisher

Thanks were expressed to Fabian Hiscock for his time and effort; investigating, sourcing and securing the purchase of our new floor polisher, which is proving to be a valuable asset to our cleaning equipment.

5 FINANCIAL REPORT

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

The final outcome for the year ended 31st December 2017 was a surplus of £5,836. The provisional figure given at the previous meeting was £5,020. The reconciled bank balance at 31st December 2017 was £33,074, compared to the provisional figure given at our previous meeting of £32,259.

David said that he had been unable to retrieve his OPAS (Online Parish Accounts System) budget for 2017 (which excluded Growing in Faith Funds - see the minutes of previous meetings). However, having reconstructed that budget as far as possible, income was £7,435 above budget. *[Note: although not set out in the meeting, the difference was due mainly to an additional Gift Aid tax refund for an earlier year of £4,100 and a legacy of £2,000.]* Expenditure was higher by £7,100. *[Note: although not set out in the meeting, the difference was largely due to property costs being £6,400 higher than budgeted, utility costs being £2,100 higher and fixed asset purchases being 2,100 lower.]*

David said that, as promised at the previous meeting, he had revisited the question of catechetical income and expenditure for 2017. Income remained at £945, but the actual expenditure was £602. David had reported income at the previous meeting as being £951, but subsequently found this to be due to an error in posting. Therefore, the decision to reduce the catechetical surplus was justified. David noted that income to 31st March 2018 was £320.

David advised us that he wanted to warn of a potential additional cost in relation to third party receipts and payments. These are amounts donated by parishioners for third party charities, which are either sent to those charities by St Bede's or collected by the Diocese for onward transmission. The 2017 Annual Financial Return (AFR) shows a £Nil balance carried forward. However, when David spoke to Beverley Meakes (Diocesan Parish Support Team) about whether the 2017 accounts could be published, the AFR having been accepted, Beverley had advised him that a colleague of hers in Finance had now raised a query about whether this £Nil balance is correct. As David had not heard further, he had carried out an analysis from the AFRs from 2006 to 2017. This analysis shows that we appear to owe a net amount of £440. This stemmed from a net underpayment in 2014 of £2,400 that did not appear to have been carried forward correctly to 2015 (that being the only year's AFR that is now incomplete). David has contacted Beverley to see how we can resolve this.

David informed us that the costs relating to the new central heating were as follows:

- Water supply - £2,340 (Paid)
- Heating - £24,720 (Paid)
- Remedial work - £1,488 (Work completed)
- Making good brickwork - £1,122 (Quote accepted)

This totals £29,670, as compared to an estimate of £30,000.

A loan of £15,000 has been agreed by Diocese. This is repayable over up to seven years (we requested it over five years and can repay it early if we wish). The current interest rate is 1.9%. David has asked the Diocese how we can draw this loan down.

David informed us that a donation of £10,000 towards the cost of the new central heating has been received from a parishioner. Fr John confirmed that the donor wishes to remain anonymous. It was generally agreed that Fr John should send a personalised thank you note to this generous parishioner, and to any other parishioners donating funds. Fr John agreed to do so.

David advised us that the outcome for the three months to 31st March 2018 (excluding central heating costs) appeared to be:

- Income: £14,608 (Budget - 2017 increased by 1% - £18,523)
- Expenditure: £14,275 (Budget - 2017 increased by 3% - £18,403)
- Surplus: £333 (Budget £120)
- Bank balance: £43,507 (David said that this appears to be incorrect as it does not include central heating costs and other sundry items; the figure should be closer to £16,246)

David added that Offertories (excluding Easter offerings) in the three months to 31st March 2017 amounted to £10,305. The corresponding figure for 2018 is £9,703. The downward trend is of concern, although it is hoped that the recent Stewardship Campaign would help to reverse this trend. David said that Lisa Shirt had undertaken some analysis and that initial indications are that we will receive an additional £5,600 over a full year. David added that he would like to record his thanks to the Finance Committee members for their efforts.

David said that a Gift Aid tax refund claim for the maximum amount allowed of £1,250 in respect of loose cash received in 2015/16 had been sent to Diocese.

Finally, David advised us that an estimate of £4,696 had been received to repair the flat roof over the Hall kitchen. This was discussed and it was agreed that there appears to be uncertainty as to what the quote covers and that, based on the work understood to be required, the quote appears excessive. Ursula is to follow this up with Chris Fanning (Senior Diocesan Surveyor).

David expressed thanks to his fellow members of the Finance Committee for all their hard work in connection with the recent Stewardship Campaign. Thanks were then expressed to David for his unstinting commitment to the parish; preparing figures and paperwork for the recent Stewardship Campaign and parish loan mentioned earlier.

6 PROPERTY & GROUNDS MAINTENANCE (brief update)

Replacement of Toilet & Basin in Presbytery Lobby

Ursula advised us that Bernie McIntosh, who was due to give a quote for this task and repair the tap in the Hall kitchen, now has health challenges and will not be in a position to follow it up. We will therefore need to approach another contractor.

Health & Safety – Inspection Feedback

Our Precision H & S Inspection took place in February. Ursula advised us that the list of requirements to be fulfilled is shorter than last time, due to tasks already carried out. She has already obtained and positioned some additional signage that was listed, and will email Phil Hendrick to discuss the other items on the list.

Fencing at rear of Hall

We still need to erect a robust fence at the rear of the Hall, following the tree work carried out some months ago. This task is on our list of work required, and we will need to budget for it. June Jones agreed to obtain some estimates for this work.

Lamp Post in driveway

Ursula advised us that she approached Chris Fanning (Senior Diocesan Surveyor) regarding this issue, as attempts to get local contractors to repair the light had failed. Chris recommended an electrician named Tom Flynn, who has removed the components inside the lamp for cleaning/repair, as these were corroded. He is due to return in the next week or so to carry out the final repair.

7 FR JOHN'S REPORT

Fr John reported that numbers attending Mass remain stable, and the Holy Week services went well.

We have 18 First Holy Communion candidates. The preparation classes are being led by Liz Hughes, assisted by two additional adults.

We have approximately 6 Confirmation candidates, with the first preparation class taking place at the same time as our meeting, led by Danny Risdon.

Fr John expressed his thanks for everyone's patience during the recent installation of the new central heating and associated works. This seems to have been well received.

He also thanked the Finance Committee and all who responded to the recent Stewardship Campaign, including those involved in fundraising, and two anonymous parishioners who had donated sums of £10,000 and £100 towards the central heating installation.

The 60th Anniversary events are well underway.

The matter of letters of thanks for the anonymous donors was raised. Fr John confirmed that the parishioners in question definitely wished to remain anonymous, and it was suggested that he should write personal letters of thanks, as it would not be appropriate for the Parish Administrator to do so. Fr John agreed to do this.

8 SAFEGUARDING

Ursula had nothing to report.

The matter of adult supervision for the Confirmation classes was raised. As we only have 6 candidates, it will not be necessary for Danny Risdon to enlist an additional DBS checked adult to assist.

9 PAST EVENTS

St Patrick's Day Parish Breakfast

This was very successful. Thanks were expressed to Angie and Siobhan for their input. Approximately £300 was raised, and this will go towards our expenditure for the new central heating.

It was noted that we need to encourage more new volunteers to run events such as Parish Breakfasts.

Day of Recollection for Eucharistic Ministers

This event, led by Mary Crowley (Diocesan Catechetics Adviser) was very successful. Many of our Eucharistic Ministers attended, plus one new volunteer. Those attending appreciated the content of the session, and felt it would be beneficial to run similar sessions from time to time; maybe in the form of an evening meeting.

Ursula advised us that we have two prospective new Eucharistic Ministers. David Marston kindly agreed to arrange a meeting with them in the near future to begin their induction.

Easter Raffle

Thanks were expressed to June Jones for organising the Easter raffle, which raised just over £300. We acknowledged that this success was due to June's creative skills. The beautiful hampers she had prepared as prizes, and displayed so attractively, undoubtedly boosted raffle ticket sales.

Rwanda Sisterhood

June thanked Fr John for allowing St Bede's to host the recent charity lunch in support of the Rwanda Sisterhood. Dame Helen Hyde, former Headteacher of Watford Grammar School for Girls, gave a presentation, followed by lunch. The sum of £600 was raised, and will help to provide women in Rwanda with a knitting machine and 'Mama' packs.

10 FORTHCOMING EVENTS

60th ANNIVERSARY EVENTS

Celebration Meal – Friday 18th May 2018

Tickets for this event are now on sale at £20 each. The venue will be West Herts Golf Club. Louise, June and Ursula are to co-ordinate the arrangements.

Afternoon Tea – Friday 15th June 2018

June reminded us that we will be holding an Afternoon Tea – tickets will be £10 each. Further details to follow.

Parish Breakfast – Sunday 27th May 2018

There will be a Parish Breakfast, to mark the Feast of St Bede, after 10am Mass on Sunday 27th May. This will be preceded by a brief ceremony to bless the new garden bench, donated by the Shanahan Family. Members of the Shanahan Family have been invited to attend, as mentioned earlier in the meeting.

Other Ideas for Events

Louise informed us that she had investigated some options, e.g. a pilgrimage to Walsingham, or a retreat day at the Niland Centre in Bushey. There was some discussion, and it was decided the 60th Anniversary Committee could take this forward. Ursula suggested we might appeal for interest in the weekly Newsletter.

Fairtrade Event / Coffee Morning

As part of our efforts to meet the criteria to become a Fair Trade parish, Eleri Davies, a member of the Methodist Church and a keen supporter of the Fair Trade organisation, will give a presentation after 10am Mass on Sunday 13th May. This will be followed by refreshments in the Hall, when we will be serving Fair Trade tea, coffee and biscuits. Ursula will liaise with Eleri to finalise the details.

First Holy Communion 2018

Already mentioned in Item 7.

Confirmation 2018

Already mentioned in Item 7.

Adoremus – National Eucharistic Pilgrimage & congress (Fri 7th to Sun 9th Sept 2018)

We were informed that Fabian Hiscock has volunteered to represent St Bede's at this event. Ursula advised us that she had approached one other parishioner, but was waiting for a response. She will follow this up.

Croxley Revels – Saturday 23rd June 2018

We were advised that Paul & Ursula Bartlett are willing to co-ordinate a stall on The Green once again. Help will be required, and we will appeal for volunteers nearer the time.

11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**Children's participation during Mass**

June expressed thanks to Stephen Hussey and Mike McDermott for their musical input on Sunday 22nd April, when the children of the parish actively participated in 10am Mass. It seemed very fitting that it was Good Shepherd Sunday. Ursula reminded us that we need to make our children feel special, as this will help to nurture their faith. We all agreed that we should involve the children in Mass more often; and encourage the Catechists to co-ordinate this.

Altar Servers

Ursula informed us that we have made no progress in our quest to recruit more Altar Servers. She suggested that we might ask Danny Risdon to take this forward once this year's Confirmation programme has finished.

Parish Nurse

David Reilly, a member of the Parish Nurse Steering Committee, updated us on this project.

An application to set up a charity is now being submitted, and funding from Three Rivers District Council will make the project viable for an initial period of 5 years. More details will be released as and when progress is made.

General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

The new laws governing data protection come into force on 25th May 2018. Ursula advised us that an email from the Diocese, had arrived earlier that day, with some multiple page attachments. She will read through to find out what we need to do as a parish. There was some discussion, and it was agreed that Ursula may need some assistance with any procedures that need to put in place.

Weekly Newsletter Items

Our attention was drawn to an item that has appeared in the Newsletter repeatedly for some time; appealing for a volunteer to provide transport for a parishioner to and from Mass. Ursula explained that in spite of repeated appeals, no one has come forward as yet, so the item will remain while space permits.

CARITAS 'Love in Action' Programme

As there is rather a lot going on this year, it was decided that any involvement in this programme should be held in abeyance until maybe next year.

12 DATE OF NEXT MEETING / CLOSING PRAYER

The next meeting was scheduled for Monday 30th July 2018 at 7.30pm.

Fr John closed the meeting with a prayer at 9.30pm.

Ursula Bartlett (May 2018)