

ST BEDE'S CATHOLIC CHURCH – CROXLEY GREEN

NOTES

Parish in Council Meeting Monday 22nd October 2018 7.30pm

PRESENT

Fr John Wiley, Louise McKenna (Chair), Paul Bartlett, John Charnley, Fabian Hiscock, Michelle Hussey, June Jones, David Marston, Ursula Bartlett (Minutes).

1 OPENING PRAYER

Fr John opened the meeting with a prayer.

2 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from David Reilly.

3 NOTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING – Mon 30th July 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)

May & June 2018 Planned Giving envelopes query

David Marston enquired whether this query had been resolved. Ursula reported that the matter had been discussed at the Finance Committee Meeting. It had been suggested that a combination of multiple envelope donations (possibly due to holiday absence), plus some parishioners changing from envelopes to bank standing order, may have caused an inconsistency. Ursula advised us that monitoring will take place over the next few months to clarify the situation.

5 FINANCIAL REPORT

Ursula read out David Reilly's report in his absence.

Budget for 2018

With apologies, I should have mentioned in the last meeting that the budgeted increase for Property Repairs and Renewals over 2017 is 5% rather than 3%. This is to reflect the additional costs relating to the flat roofing and guttering/soffits.

I have also now amended the budget to take account of the loan repayments of £179 a month. There is also a small amount of interest (£8 in June). As only one amount of interest has been charged, I do not know yet whether the amount is going to be the same each month).

Results to 31 August 2018

The outcome for the eight months to 31st August 2018 on OPAS was:

Income: £69,633 (Budget: £70,203. Offertories and similar are £1,030 higher and other income £1,600 lower than budgeted. However, third party receipts - those which are passed on to other charities - account for £1,930 of the deficit in other income).

Expenditure: £73,985 (Budget: £72,509. There is a combination of over and under spending. In addition, third party payments are £2,093 less than budgeted)

Deficit: -£4,352 (Budget: -£2,306)

Bank balance: £28,622 (Budget: £30,768.)

Offertories

In the eight months to 31st August 2018:

- envelope offerings were £2,744 less than budgeted;
- standing orders were £3,816 more than budgeted: and
- loose plate was £59 less than budgeted.

The May and June 2018 envelope figures reported at the last meeting as being £1,666 lower than expected were considered at the Finance Committee meeting on 16th August 2018. The envelopes for the period from 13th May to 10th June 2018 were reviewed and compared to the totals to the Weekly Cash Sheets. The amounts appeared to agree. It was noted that multiple envelopes had been submitted by a small number of donors in some weeks, skewing the expected results. It was concluded that the apparent inconsistency in the envelope donations was likely to be no more sinister than parishioners making up for weeks when they were away. However, recommendations were made to seek to further improve the security around cash handling.

Gift Aid

Due to family and other commitments, Lisa Shirt - our Gift Aid co-ordinator - has resigned from the Finance Committee. We will be seeking a replacement. The Finance Committee is very grateful to Lisa for her help and support during her tenure.

Third party receipts and payments

Nothing further has been heard as yet from the Diocese about the analysis of third party receipts and payments referred to at previous meetings.

Fascias, soffits and gutters

Following the discussion at the previous Parish in Council meeting, and the agreement that this work was required as soon as possible, the Finance Committee considered the timing of the repairs at the meeting on 16th August 2018. It was agreed that, although this would increase the budgeted deficit for the year, it would ultimately save money to have the repairs carried out now rather than leave the work for a later period, especially if there were further squirrel infestations.

A query was raised regarding the issue of inconsistent Planned Giving envelope figures for May and June 2018 (referred to in the Financial Report). There was some discussion regarding the security arrangements that are in place for cash, and Ursula assured us that the Finance Committee are in the process of reviewing and improving the system.

6 PROPERTY & GROUNDS MAINTENANCE (brief update)

Building Repairs – recently completed / still outstanding

Ursula gave a brief update.

The lower flat roof over the Hall kitchen has been replaced, and patchwork repairs have been made to the main, higher area, of the hall roof.

The Presbytery fascia boards and soffits have now been replaced. A saving of £400 was made by having the existing cast iron guttering removed, refurbished and replaced. We have now received an estimate for work to upgrade the guttering around the church, which is now in poor condition.

The lamp post in the driveway is now working efficiently.

Recently, it was discovered that the ceiling paper in Fr John's sitting room was peeling off. A local contractor, Brian Abbott, was instructed to re-paper and re-paint the ceiling. This work has now been completed at a cost of £235.00. Brian has provided an estimate of £210.00 to make good and re-paint the water damaged part of the ceiling in the Presbytery upstairs bathroom (due to water damage, following the squirrel invasion some months ago). He has been instructed to carry out this work.

Grounds – recent improvements to memorial garden, etc.; future tidy up morning

Thanks were expressed to June & Chris Jones. They have recently greatly enhanced the memorial garden; tidying up the 'annexe' area, and adding plants.

Garden Tidy Up

There are a number of roses and other shrubs that need pruning back for winter, and it was proposed that we hold a 'garden tidy up' morning. We agreed on Saturday 17th November 2018, from 10am to 12 noon. Ursula will appeal for volunteers in the Newsletter.

June advised us that she has arranged for a local contractor to give advice and quote for a new fence along the boundary behind the Hall.

It was noted that the side gate, between the Hall and garage, needs attention. The catch does not work, and there is rot setting in along the bottom.

Lamp Post in driveway

This is now working, thanks to Fabian, who has mastered the time clock system.

Hall Cleaner

Ursula advised us that Lynn Newman took up her post of Hall Cleaner in August. Lynn is employed for 2 hours per week, and will normally clean for 1 hour on both Monday and Friday mornings. This arrangement is proving very successful.

7 FATHER JOHN'S REPORT

Fr John stated that the 60th Anniversary Mass was a great success. He commented on the support from the other churches, and the importance of fostering our ecumenical relationships.

He advised us that there had been a slight decrease in Mass attendance during the summer months, and this trend seems to have disappointingly continued. He expressed his feeling that commitment to attending Mass every week may be in decline. This is a concern. The Offertory collectors carry out a head count at each weekend Mass, which helps to keep track of the situation.

Fr John then advised us that he had recently visited Father Philip, and was pleased to report that there has been some improvement in his health.

8 SAFEGUARDING

Ursula had nothing specific to report.

9 ADOREMUS

Thanks were expressed to Fabian, who represented St Bede's at this recent Eucharistic Congress in Liverpool. Fabian gave us a brief account of his experiences and expressed his feeling that the event was well organised. He informed us that there were some very prestigious speakers, and all the presentations given are available online. Overall, it was a very positive experience.

In conclusion, Fabian advised us that he felt his mission was to relay the enthusiasm and message from the Congress. The Church is responsible for inspiring respect, action and good works, and he handed out copies of the Poem of St Teresa of Avila; very appropriate words.

There was some discussion about ways in which we could enthuse the parish, such as providing opportunities for additional devotions such as Benediction and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. The possibility of an Alpha Course was also suggested. We agreed there was a need to promote devotion, remind ourselves of our Catholic duties, encourage commitment to attend Mass regularly, as well as carry out good works. We were advised that the second World Day of the Poor, designated by Pope Francis, is scheduled to take place on Sunday 18th November.

A suggestion to set up a sub-committee to take this initiative forward was welcomed. We set a date for Thursday 8th November 2018 at 2.00pm for the first meeting. Ursula will publicise this in the weekly Newsletter.

10 PARISH EVENTS

Review of 60th Anniversary Celebration Mass

Thanks and Congratulations were expressed to all who were involved in our very successful 60th Anniversary Mass on Sunday 16th September. Many hours of preparation, by many dedicated parishioners, went into ensuring everything ran smoothly. Beautiful floral displays adorned the church; several senior and younger members of the parish participated in the readings and Offertory procession; and our Choir, joined by choir members from St Oswald's and All Saints, provided a magnificent choral contribution. Afterwards, all were invited into the Hall for light refreshments; proficiently organised in true 'St Bede's' style!

Forthcoming Events

Quiz Evening – Friday 2nd November 2018

Plans are now well underway for this event. Madeline Leech, who has organised the questions for our quizzes and acted as Quiz Master over the past 25 years, has indicated that she now wishes to stand down. Grateful thanks were expressed to Madeline for her sterling efforts.

Parish Breakfast – Sunday 16th December 2018

Details of our next Parish Breakfast will be publicised soon.

11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Altar Servers

Ursula reported that she had approached Robert Phipps with a view to training for new Altar Servers. However, Robert is currently unable to commit to this task. It seems that some interest has been shown by First Holy Communion candidates in the past, so we need to respond to this interest.

Fairtrade

Ursula reminded us that we are still pursuing Fairtrade status for St Bede's. She has an application form, and will now make a formal application. We need to ensure we use Fairtrade products where possible, and hold an event focusing on Fairtrade at least once a year, ideally around the time of Fairtrade Fortnight.

All Saints Church 'Blessing of the Doors' Service

Ursula advised us that we have received a lovely email message from Chris Ashley (All Saints); thanking all the St Bede's parishioners who attended this recent event. He particularly mentioned those who joined the combined choir for this special occasion.

12 DATE OF NEXT MEETING / CLOSING PRAYER

The next meeting was scheduled for Monday 11th February 2019 at 7.30pm.

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

Ursula Bartlett (October 2018)