

St Hugh of Lincoln Parish Pastoral Council
Annual Parish Meeting
24 February 2016, 8pm, Fortescue Hall

Present: Fr Jimmy, Phil Clarke, Ann-Marie Palmer, Ursula White, Terry Benson, Cliff Marshall, Angela Scouller, Alan Scouller, Sr Joan, David Legg, Ian Hunt, Alex Rebello

Apologies: Julie Cranston, Peter & Angela Spreckley, Sue Card, Jacquie Maddison

	Action
<p><i>Fr Jimmy opened the meeting with a prayer.</i></p> <p><u>Approve Minutes of 18 November / matters arising</u></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 18 November were approved.</p>	
<p><u>Parish Priest's Report</u></p> <p>Fr Jimmy advised that this was a time to look back at the previous year and forward to the coming. Highlights being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The parish is made up of 4 communities (representing the 4 different masses). Fr Jimmy advised that he meets new parishioners most weeks. • Average weekly mass attendance for October 757 (2014 770); which includes the Polish community (with estimated weekly attendance of 80 – 150). • New Polish priest – Fr Cezary <p><i>Catechetics</i> – from the Greek meaning Echo – faith sharing and imparting knowledge. Cardinal Vincent being the main teacher in the Diocese.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40 Catechists in the Parish. • Baptism programme has just been handed over to 2 young mums and a couple are looking at the pre-marriage preparation course for engaged couples. • FHC in 2015 saw the largest ever numbers (47) made up of children from St Thomas More and other schools. Very enthusiastic and a testament to parents and catechists. 39 children enrolled in the 2015/16 programme. • 30 young people confirmed in 2015 which included some from Hitchin. (Not all prepared in Letchworth due to a clash of dates with the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme). Hitchin has moved Confirmation to Year 9 (whereas we look at Year 10) although the Diocesan policy is Year 8 and above. Use UCAT programme. • 35 children baptised (not all under a year old); with some Baptisms taking place at the 9.30am Sunday mass. <p><i>Liturgical</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flower arrangers, liturgical music, Children's liturgy, Readers, Altar Servers, Cleaners. • More Eucharistic ministers / readers need. • 35 funerals took place (some Church and Crematorium Services). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blessed to have a Parish Primary school and Fr Jimmy advised he tries to visit once a week. At present 2 classes a week are attending Stations of the Cross in church. • Introduced the Sacrament of Reconciliation in St Thomas More; at first during Lent (years 3,4,5 &6) but now also during Advent for Years 4, 5 & 6. • John Henry Newman is a Deanery school of approximately 1500 children. The Deanery had been encouraging the school to attach a local priest to each year group for some time and this has just happened. Fr Jimmy advised he had been linked to Year 10 (our Confirmation group year) and will now attend assembly's etc. • Youth Group – there are 7 adults looking after the Youth Group with 50 children across 2 groups. 	

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- Fr Jimmy – keen re local caritas (reaching out to the community). KSC and SVP doing some very good work within the parish with the SVP being able to help 5 or 6 families at Christmas. The SVP Christmas appeal raised approx. £1300 and this could be an annual collection going forward. Also closely involved with the Food Bank.
- Need a strategy around adult education and Fr Jimmy acknowledged that this has not progressed.
- Year of Mercy – runs from December 8th until the Feast of Christ the King (a small team to work with Fr Jimmy on this during the year).
- There will a Year of Mercy pilgrimage to Bruges in early May to coincide with the Feast of the Ascension. The Cardinal is visiting the Deanery for the Year of Mercy.
- Door of Mercy – there are 8 Doors of Mercy around the Diocese including Our Lady’s in Welwyn Garden City. The Cardinal will visit on Sunday 3 July from 4pm – Catechesis, Mass and Social event.
- Diocesan pilgrimage to Walsingham on 9 July. As many priests of the Diocese as possible are being encouraged to attend with those unable to attend being asked to host Mass for maybe 2/3 parishes on the day. Fr Jimmy advised he has a wedding so will be unable to attend, so St Hugh’s will probably be hosting mass for the surrounding area.
- Other events to be confirmed will be a Deanery Mission of Mercy – 5/6 nights in early June and a Herts Pilgrimage to St Albans, but no definite information as yet.
- We have change of Bishop for Hertfordshire – Bishop Paul McAleenan and a Mass of welcome is to be held at St Hilda’s in Stevenage on 2 March.

Premises Update

Alan updated the meeting re the latest developments of the parish project – please see below:

Parish Meeting / Training Room

1. *Having spoken to representatives of various Parish groups and some other Parishioners I have found substantial support for the Parish to have a properly equipped and furnished meeting / training room. Not all active groups would use it, for example in the case of First Communion preparation the Hall would need to be used due to the number of children and parents involved, so too for the Youth Club. Some Prayer and Discussion groups would prefer to continue to meet in their houses but a number of Prayer groups use the Sacristy or the Church and would welcome a meeting room facility.*
2. *The provision of an office within the Parish House was necessary and is useful for very small groups but it does not provide space to meet the needs of larger groups. Fortescue Hall is suitable for social and other events but would need to be converted at substantial cost to meet the needs of the Parish for meetings and would then become less suitable for its present purposes including commercial lettings.*
3. *A priority need is for a suitable room for the Children’s Liturgy Group at the 9.30 Mass on Sundays. The numbers vary, on a recent Sunday there were 25 children but numbers can be 30 or even 40. The Sacristy and adjacent room are not suitable for the long term and the group needs access to a room entered from the Church. The Confirmation preparation group would favour using a meeting room rather than the Hall if it were to be sufficiently large for breaking into small discussion groups. The room would also be available and useful for smaller groups like SVP, KSC, SASH and Prayer and discussion groups.*
4. *Father Jimmy would wish the room to be used for the training of Eucharistic Ministers, Readers, Catechists, and Welcoming Groups and for Baptism preparation.*
5. *But the urgent need in Fr Jimmy’s view is for a room for adult education in support of Evangelisation promoted by the Bishops of England and Wales and seen as a priority by Pope Francis in his exhortation “Evangelii Gaudium”. The Pope emphasises the importance of the Parish as “the Church living in the midst of the homes of her sons and daughters”. He says,
“*The parish is the presence of the Church in a given territory, an environment for growth in the Christian life, for dialogue, proclamation, charitable outreach, worship and celebration. In all its activities the parish encourages and trains its members to be evangelisers*” (paragraph 28).*

Alan Scouller

- Colin Smart appointed as architect.
- 11 May provisional date for Parish Council meeting to present the plans of the project to the parish.
- Fr Jimmy advised that a feasibility study is being undertaken to look at replacing the church heating. Being 33 years old the boiler does give up from time to time and parts are now difficult to source.

<p><u>Finance Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ian circulated figures (last 3 years / projections) • Standing Orders increased from 3,000 to 4,600 per month • Overheads – static • Salaries – down slightly • Surplus for the year of £50K. Spend soon required for resurfacing of car park and church boiler. £92.5K in the bank at year end. (Improvement from October 2013 of £14K). • Thanks to finance / planned giving / fundraising for the work involved in turning this around. • Ian advised that the Diocesan assessment of 29% is based on 2 years previous from offertory income. If our income goes up then the assessment goes up. • Largest items of expenditure are the Diocesan assessment and salaries. • Income per head has increased from £2.68 to £2.80 (as opposed to £2.52 for peer parishes). • Disappointment was voiced at the increase in offertory collections. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Plan is for low key follow up to planned giving appeal, taking advice from Hitchin parish. Concern that the top 10 contributors in the parish are getting older so we need to broaden the base. Looking at 3 years for further campaign. 21% of collection is made up from 9 standing orders / older generation. ◆ Hall rental / 200 Club also accounted for increase to income. 	
<p><u>Fundraising Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ursula advised that Joan Keogh has joined the committee. • Looking to repeat programme of events from last year, ie Spring Concert, Garden Party and Christmas Fayre. • 2015 Christmas Fayre raised £3,000, slightly down on the previous year. Have looked at what went well and what can be improved. Date to be confirmed. • £600 raised via Easyfundraising from 23 parishioners. • Thank you to the fundraising committee. 	
<p><u>Any Other Business</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phil confirmed that he was looking to set up wifi from the house to the hall this weekend. This would not be open but used to control the heating from the house / with log in given to limited people on a need to know basis and password protected. <p><i>Fr Jimmy closed the meeting with a prayer.</i></p>	

Certified a true record of the meeting.

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Chair