

**SS ALBAN AND STEPHEN RC CHURCH
PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 13th May 2013**

Persons Present: Fr Charles Sweeney, Fr Jimmy Stubbs, Fr Tom Hewitt, Steve Pickard, James O'Hare, Brendan Day, Peter Berners Lee, Joanna Roche, Danielle Porteous, Mike Walsh, Joanna French, David Myles and Cath White.

Apologies received: Helen Bassill and Mike White

Parish Assembly and Pastoral Council Objectives:

1. To make the Church more alive and open to the Spirit and to further the spread of the Kingdom of God;
2. To provide a structure for constructive dialogue with the Parish Community and thus serve as a means of consultation and communication in the Parish;
3. To ensure an ongoing assessment of the spiritual, social and human needs of the Parish and to foster ways to meet these needs; and

To draw out, draw together, and draw upon the talents and gifts of the Christian Community in the Parish. "As each one has received a gift use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace." (1 Peter 4:10)

The meeting began by welcoming David Myles to the PPC, he is to be the 'Communications Group' representative.

We also said goodbye to Danielle Porteous who is leaving the Parish. Fr Charles thanked her for all her hard work and commitment in so many different projects. We as a parish are very grateful.

We also heard that Joanna French has resigned from her post as Youth Officer, she will work out her notice until the end of October.

1. Minutes of the last meeting

No matters arising.

2. Nominations for the post of vice chairman

Unfortunately no one volunteered for this post at present.

3. Reports

Youth – apologies for no report.

Parish Friends – The group are currently looking for a new chairperson.

Communications – since David's appointment he has been hard at work recruiting. 12/13 people have agreed to help with the group all have a variety of skills.

It is proposed that a central data base is to be established, capturing neighbourhood links, people who need lifts etc. There is a concern about the number of people who are currently holding information on their personal computers. We need a data protection policy to cover ourselves,

David has suggested a policy based upon current legislation. The objective will be for all the information to be in one place - David to meet with Charles, Gina and one or two other invited people to discuss how this can be organised. He was thanked for his hard work so far and for agreeing to take this on.

Documents have been circulated on the proposals any feedback direct to David.

Worship –the new hymn books should arrive by the end of the week. Labels for dedications were agreed. These will be typed on to sticky paper after each person has filled in a card. It does not need to be dated. There should be a uniform message from the pulpit on one Sunday, there is to be no dead line as to when people can buy a dedication. It was suggested that the Gift Aid donation should be printed on the form people complete.

It is planned that anyone who bought a dedication for the old hymn books be invited to take one home. It was suggested that any left over should be donated to a much less well off parish.

Justice and Peace – the group recently attended a J & P meeting in Aston. The focus was on the new Universal Credit System being brought in by the current Government. They will continue to feed through information but in the meantime we should be alert to people being affected in our own community

Mission – there is to be a visit by a theatre company on 26th June to the Parish detailing the story of St Alban, the play is called 'From Soldier to Saint'.

4. Fr Charles' Report

Fr Charles began by thanking all those involved in the Sacramental programmes. We had 118 on the First communion Programme and approximately 50 on the Confirmation programme. There was good feedback from all attending particularly those visiting from other parishes about how impressed they were.

Work on the hall has begun this week. The quoted price is £464,000 plus VAT. The parish is taking out a loan of £180,000 over 7 years. It is hoped that the hall will be complete by 16th October 2013. Nicholas Breakspere school have offered the use of their rooms should we need them and these can be booked through contacting Fr Charles or Brendan Day. Loreto are also willing to help out.

A further £11,000 is needed to replace and improve the windows in the hall which will go ahead if there are enough funds at the end of the project. A request was made to have better blinds put in which cannot be played with easily by young children, these would also be black out blinds. Brendan to email the finance committee about this coming out of general maintenance budget.

During the hall redevelopment there will be no Children's liturgy and it is planned to use special children's prayers for the mass to keep the services shorter.

There will be forty hours of devotion of the Blessed Sacrament up until the 11am mass on Corpus Christi.

On the 22nd June another parish will be making a pilgrimage to St Albans as part of the year of Faith programme. They will join the 6pm mass. Mike Walsh to ask the worship group for music for that mass.

The Work at the back of the church has begun on 13/5 to improve the porch area and the displays.

5. Growing in Faith

The programme has now begun. People have been very generous and a lot of people have responded. However, there have been complaints about the structure and secrecy of the project. As a parish we have not followed the rules entirely and Fr Charles feels that there would be more complaints if we did. All the points which Mike Walsh raised in the email before the meeting were acknowledged, it was an unwelcome process and the priests have felt uncomfortable. The only people who know how much each individual gives are Fr Charles and one other administrator.

There was still a sense of unease about the way in which the church had gone about this programme and after some discussion it was agreed that the PPC would write a collective letter stating our objections. People were invited to contribute bullet points to Brendan who will then compose a group letter. You will then be asked if you wish to sign.

The three charities which were agreed on to benefit from our 20% were The Living Room, Centre 33 and the Catholic Workers Farm. In addition a small proportion will go towards the hall development.

The next steps in the campaign have now been received, volunteers to contact other people, and then there will be the big launch in the parish with Bp John Sherrington coming from the diocese to promote this stage. Following on from the Census the priests will write to everyone in the parish and invite them to fill in a card with a suggested donation.

6. Pilgrimage to Iona

Sixteen people have booked in with the possibility of having one more in the group.

7. Website

Mike asked us all to consider what we want on the Website. It should be kept up to date with weekly news, events and reference data.

Rota for news in the Bulletin

Weekend of 18/19th May - Worship

Weekend of 25/26th May - Youth

Weekend of 1st/2nd June – Communication

Weekend of 8/9th June – Mission

Weekend of 15/16th June – Justice and Peace

Weekend of 22/23rd June – Parish Friends

Date of next meeting – 10th June 2013

Peter to lead the opening prayer.