

MINUTES OF ST BARTHOLOMEW'S PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY 12TH JULY 2017 @ 8pm.

Those Present: Fr Deo (FRD); Fr Innocent (FRI); Richard Bush (RB); Gerard Cowie (GCO);
Tim O'Donoghue (TOD); Melvin Carty (MC); Eddie Sanders (ES); Gordon Clark (GCL);
Deacon Ged Perkins (GP); Tony Price (TP); Claire Rhodes (CR).

- 1/ The meeting began with a prayer led by Fr Deo, being one by St Catherine of Siena.
- 2/ Apologies for absence were received from Teresa Furtado (TF), Tony McGing, (TMG) Savio Fernandes (SF) & Sr Ann Ugo (SRA).
- 3/ Minutes of the previous meeting. There were no matters arising, and said minutes were proposed by TOD and seconded by MC. TP will now proceed to post them on the Parish Web Site.
- 4/ Matters Arising from the minutes –
TP supported the idea from GCO of an "Ask Father" section in the newsletter, as an aid to educating people on the basics of our faith, adding support to Fr Deo's weekly "thoughts".
GCO is still trying to get in touch with Fr Philip Glandfield in respect of his printed guidance on "How to go to Communion".
GCL stated that feedback on the new format of the newsletter has so far been positive. TP remarked on the great addition that pictures make when they can be and are used as appropriate.

5/ PRESIDENT'S REPORT FROM FR DEO

1. Fr Deo reminded us that he will be absent from 19th July 2017 until 24th August 2017. Masses will continue to be said both daily and at weekends, with cover from other priests arranged as required, in particular for the 10am & 11.30am Masses on Sundays.
2. SOCIAL COMMITTEE – This has been sorted, but is not yet up and running. More representation from female parishioners is sought. The AGM would be his preferred launch date.
3. FUNDRAISING – No meeting has yet taken place due to the unavailability of the Chairman of the Finance Committee.
4. CONFIRMATION – This year's Confirmations went very well indeed, thanks to the involvement of all concerned. Bishop Pat commented on the excellent preparation and the clarity of responses made by the candidates. GP added his thanks at this point for the input of all those who made the occasion such a memorable one.
Confirmations for 2018 are likely to be on Sunday 13th May or Sunday 20th May (Pentecost Sunday), though we have to wait until August to book a slot with Bishop Pat's secretary.
5. CENSUS – This will take place after Christmas. Help in finding a database has been provided by our MC, Jed Murphy, who will oversee the bedding in of the census, with training as required. It is critical that the census is properly organised, with adequate reminders preceding the launch.

GCL asked about fundraising for the new boiler. FRD said we might need to borrow from the diocese first. GCL reported that the two quotes received were very wide apart, and finding a third was proving difficult due to the lack of companies still operating in this sector. Fewer companies still actually maintain such equipment.

TP mentioned the lighting, which is also in need of replacement, and GCL stated that the first thing to do is to make sure the building itself is completely sound.

TP also made the suggestion that perhaps we could look at a different way of heating the church, such as wall-mounted electric heaters. This alternative might well be more cost effective and easier to both control and maintain.

GCL also reported that the sound system is up and running, with various adjustments being made to bring it to perfection. A new amplifier has been installed.

GCL is also looking at the diocesan power supply contract in which all 44 dioceses are expected to take part, which will undoubtedly have cost savings, though these may not be high. But it will remove the need for annual renegotiations of contracts.

6/ CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FROM RICHARD BUSH

RB referred to item 9 on the agenda, which was Reports from Parish Groups. This can wait until the Parish AGM. It was not intended to include it on this occasion. The Newsletter and Web Site are carrying information about the AGM, not to mention the posters in the porch areas.

a/ The Social Committee is underway. RB and GCL to look at induction as to the use of parish premises such as the hall.

b/ The Census, as FRD mentioned, would take place around January time. RB undertook to speak at all Masses in the weeks leading up to the census. GCL suggested tying it in with Coffee Mornings. We need to get across to parishioners the aims of the census, to get them to "buy into" it. We need to demonstrate good reasons for it. RH wondered if we even need to justify the census to anybody; perhaps we are being somewhat defensive. TP pointed out that the last census was 21 years ago! GCO commented that the information from the previous census is grossly out of date, and is of little or no use to us. For the time being, he maintains any New Parishioner forms in a separate form, as and when they come in.

In terms of the census, amongst other things, we need to consider the following:

- i/ The needs of parishioners, both old and new;
- ii/ Parish groups – finding out who is willing to join;
- iii/ Discovering if people are going to other churches, or indeed coming to ours instead;
- iv/ Knowing who our lapsed Catholics are – getting parishioners who know them to hand them a census form.
- v/ Ensuring that all those who are sick and housebound or in care homes or nursing homes are included.
- vi/ Data Protection Act considerations are also important. Changes are afoot in this respect.

****ACTION POINT: GCO TO LIAISE WITH DIOCESE AS TO HOW CHANGES MIGHT AFFECT US.****

FRD added that having an up to date census would also enable parish visitation.

GCO remarked that the information collected in past years had never really been used, except for addresses and phone numbers.

TP said that we should make use of the Parish AGM to publicise the Census.

FRD reiterated that Jed Murphy, our MC, was looking at an appropriate database and would help us to get things off the ground.

7/ FINANCE REPORT FROM TONY MCGING

TMG provided a brief written report, which GCO read in his absence.

Management accounts have been prepared for the period ended 31st May 2017. They show a total income for the first five months of the year of £71,000.00, and expenditure of £81,000.00. The actual deficit will be higher than this since we have outstanding contributions yet to make to the diocese in respect of the Diocesan Development Fund and other obligations which are taken centrally. There have been no major maintenance works in recent months, and the Finance Committee had briefly discussed the possibility of an appeal to raise funds for the church boilers.

TP asked about going back to publishing the salient financials along with the newsletter.

This is something which TMG will be producing in the future.

8/ MAINTENANCE REPORT FROM GORDON CLARK –

There was a recent problem with the disabled toilet flooding. This has been repaired and, longer term, we shall be looking at making the plumbing more accessible.

The automatic doors to the side of the church have been serviced and finger guards have been added for protection of users. It is crucial that people do not get caught in the doors. In April this year, somebody was killed as a result of getting caught in the automatic door of a GP surgery.

A digital lock has been attached to the waiting room door, for access from the church. This and other locks, such as are to be fitted on the old confessional doors, will make closing down the building easier, as only those with keys or codes would be able to enter those areas. GCO said people have been known to hide in the disabled toilet and even the cleaning cupboard in the church. It is important to ensure that the health and safety of all those on our premises is taken seriously, and both our area Bishop and the diocese have been very clear about this.

We shall be checking existing maintenance contracts, to see how often maintenance occurs and what the costs are. This will help us put together budgets for different things.

The Church sound system has been further adjusted, and will continue to be adjusted until we achieve the best possible result. A speaker is once again sited in the porch, and there is also one in each of the main sacristy, the servers' sacristy and the presbytery.

9/ PARISH WEB SITE –

TP reported on the continued growth of the Parish Web Site.

Recent additions include:

- pages containing prayers to Our Lord, Our Lady, also daily prayers.
- Fr Deo's "Thoughts" from the newsletter.
- A contact page, to avoid SPAM. This is for anybody who wishes to contact the parish. There are also separate contact pages for the PPC and for the Webmaster (TP).

TP asked that groups be contacted to update their pages as required. GCO stated that, despite numerous requests, both by email and newsletter, the response had continued to be poor. As GCL pointed out, many groups are run by people who are not parishioners. GCL suggested that perhaps we email a copy of the newsletter to parish group leaders.

It was also pointed out that any pictures appearing on the web site should be with permission, particularly so in the case of children, among all the safeguarding aspects to be considered.

****ACTION POINT: GCO TO CONTACT PARISH GROUPS, POSSIBLY AFTER THE SCHOOL HOLIDAYS.****

TP also wants to make sure that the web site is mobile friendly.

FRI asked if we could have a "News of the Week" section to highlight particular things which are going on or coming up soon. GCO suggested a "rolling news" banner, which would catch the eye. TP did not feel that it would be worth consideration. FRI also suggested learning games to help the young learn more about the Catholic Faith.

The Parish History – a new version of this is currently being researched by RB and Andrew McMillan. TP has been in touch with those who produced the previous history. They have reset so that new text may be added. The proposed date of publishing would be January 2018, ten years since the last one was produced.

GCO wondered whether or not we should consider a facebook page, which many parishes have. This may appeal more to the young, though a lot of older parishioners do use social media.

10/ ANY OTHER BUSINESS

RB praised the musicality of FRI's voice, which helped to provide the tune particularly when no music was available.

GCO mentioned the arrival of the latest batch of Mass Intentions Envelopes, and provided some for members to examine. People who use Gift Aid here may apply it to Mass Offerings.

FRD mentioned the recent death of one of our young parishioners, who attended St Philomena's in Carshalton. Other parishioners were affected as a result of this tragedy, including pupils from other schools. Our thought and prayers go out to them all.

FRD also mentioned the launch of his summer 2018 Safari to Tanzania. This will be publicised shortly.

11/ DATE AND TIME OF NEXT PPC MEETING - Wednesday 13th September 2017 at 8pm.

The meeting closed at 9.25pm, with a prayer and blessing from Father Deo.