

MINUTES OF ST BARTHOLOMEW'S PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY 10TH JANUARY 2018 @ 8pm.

Fr Deo (FRD) Richard Bush (RB); Gerard Cowie (GCO); Tim O'Donoghue (TO);

Tony Price (TP); Eddie Sanders (ES); Lucy Nwagwu (LN); Gordon Clark (GCL);

Richard Harries (RH); Melvin Carty (MC); Sr Ann Ugoh (SRA); Deacon Ged Perkins (DGP)

1/ The meeting began with a prayer led by Fr Deo, which was a prayer produced in preparation for the forthcoming Eucharistic Pilgrimage and Congress, to be held in Liverpool later in September 2018.

2/ Apologies for absence were received from Fr Innocent, Teresa Furtado, Tony McGing.

3/ Minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 13th September 2017, which were deferred from the previous meeting were proposed by SRA and seconded by ES.

4/ There were no matters arising from the minutes of that meeting.

5/ Minutes of the previous meeting of Wednesday 8th November 2017 were proposed by GCO and seconded by LN

6/ There were no matters arising from the minutes of that meeting.

7/ PRESIDENT'S REPORT – Fr Deo wished everybody present a Happy New Year for 2018.

a/ The Eucharistic Pilgrimage and Congress is to be held in Liverpool in September 2018. DGP commented that Fr John Mulligan is coordinating this event for our Archdiocese. There are plans for involvement of all those not present, which may involve live broadcasts. More information will be given later in the year. The delegates themselves will report back to the parish in due course.

Two delegates will be sent from our parish, and there will also be one delegate from each school.

b/ The Bishops of England and Wales have called for an increase in Eucharistic Adoration. A meeting will be held at the Cathedral in February, with a view to forming a lay committee which will become involved in proliferating this initiative across the archdiocese. We are fortunate in having daily adoration. Another 24 hours for the Lord is envisaged for later this year.

c/ The Celebration of Christmas was most joyful and a great success. Thanks to all who had any part in the planning, organisation and execution of the Christmas liturgy.

d/ The First Holy Communion and Confirmation programmes are about to get underway. First Holy Communion will take place on Sundays 10th & 17th June and Saturday 23rd June 2018; Confirmation will be on Pentecost Sunday. May 20th 2018, with Bishop Patrick Lynch presiding.

e/ Recruitment of Catechists has not been helped by changes in the DBS system, whereby some applications may be made on line and others not. There have inevitably been some delays, not least due to the difficulty in finding volunteers.

f/ Parish Census 2018 – RB will be introducing the concept of the census at Masses one weekend, to be followed up by the census itself. Dates to be agreed and confirmed by FRD/RB.

g/ Corpus Christi Procession – This is still pending. It may be a possibility that we could meet in a public place for Benediction, but not process there. Therefore a Procession would still be required.

h/ Parish Mission – Looking forward to 2019, the time would be right for our next mission. Lent is a possibility. Perhaps the Redemptorists or the Mill Hill Fathers could be engaged. They do need a good period of notice. TP suggested planning commences after the Summer holiday. RH suggested the PPC meeting scheduled for 12th September 2018. DGP suggested we approach the two orders sooner rather than later and perhaps aim for the week before Holy Week (that is the week leading up to Palm Sunday).

i/ Parish football team – it is still an aim to get this restarted, though finding leaders is not an easy task; there are three possibilities, but a lot hangs on various commitments, with coaching of other clubs already in progress. A meeting is planned in the next few days to ascertain availability.

j/ Church heating – it is critical that this be replaced, preferably before next winter.

k/ Parish Minibus – plans are on hold for this, given the urgency of the heating.

l/ Holidays – Fr Deo reminded us that he will be off to Tanzania for two weeks from the end of January 2018. He will be back a few days before Lent commences.

8/ CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – Richard Bush

a/ RB echoed FRD in praising the hard work that went into making Christmas such a success, including the marvellous decorations. RH remarked what a great effort is made here compared to some other parishes across the country. GCO said that sufficient booklets were printed to go around, and that next year we should add a request that people should take theirs home with them. It was noted that the Repository provided an excellent range of items for Christmas, which were snapped up very quickly!

b/ TP has produced a Rotation of Minutes, which come to a total of 9, including the AGM. TP noted that, with reference to the Constitution of the PPC, that the required quorum was not met in either September or November 2017.

c/ Parish Census – January 21st 2018 was earmarked for RB to address the congregation in preparation for the census. We need to get a good idea of not only who our parishioners are, but what time and talents they might be able to offer the parish as a whole. We cannot continue to rely on the same people to do everything, nor is it the purpose of the PPC to perform such functions as are required. RB is in discussion with Ged Murphy with regard to the appropriate computer software to handle the census. RB would aim for a 5 minute slot. GCO remarked that we must consider those whose first language is not English; TOD reminded us that we must also give due consideration to the old and infirm. GCL wondered if we could combine it with a Coffee Morning, giving people a more relaxed atmosphere in which to complete their forms, and where help might be on offer too. We should also be concerned about those who live in this parish, but go elsewhere to Mass. Also, there are a number of lapsed Catholics. There are people who receive regular visits from the clergy and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, so perhaps they can help us to ensure those people are included.

7/ FINANCE REPORT – Tony McGing was not present. He is currently preparing accounts for the year ending 31st December 2017. RB will convey to TMcG the need for us to show parishioners how money has been spent; we need to be more open about this. Meanwhile, FRD is in discussion with the Diocesan Finance Office with regard to our finances in general.

RH remarked that there was no balance sheet available at the AGM. People need clarity as to how their offerings are spent. Also, various PPC members commented that, as minuted in the previous PPC meeting, there has still been no meeting of the Finance Committee since May 2017. FRD will approach TMcG on this matter.

8/ MAINTENANCE REPORT – Gordon Clark

There are no major works underway at present. The Diocese lays down certain requirements, including matters of Health and Safety. All that needs to be done is being or has been done. We are now following advice to reduce the risk of fire by replacing our votive candle stand in front of the Blessed Sacrament Altar with electric lights, also replacing the old and malfunctioning units at the Sacred Heart Altar and Our Lady's Altar. If current takings continue, these should pay for themselves within three years!

We must keep an eye on all possible sources of ignition; Wiring is in good order; All portable electrical equipment has been tested and no faults found; Ideally we should have fire wardens at each Mass; We should also have an evacuation plan and a regular test of such a plan. TP suggested that perhaps the collectors and ushers could be part of any evacuation, having received appropriate training. People would have to be nominated for such training.

Security is ever an issue, and we must all keep a lookout for potential situations developing.

The heating must be dealt with without further delay. All quotes are as per the minutes from November's PPC meeting. The cost will be in the region of £60K. We must decide whether to choose electricity or gas power; there is the possibility of a VAT clawback, which would help a great deal. A second radiator is already failing in the retro chapel.

The Diocese is making use of a national collective, along with 19 other dioceses, whereby utilities are all dealt with centrally, and the surplus this will generate should comfortably cover the 5% VAT on fuel. GCL and GCO are working together to arrange for the new organisation to take over our fuel management and payment.

Structural problems are being caused by the roots of trees in the garden next door to us in Hepworth Road. Cracks have appeared in the walls, and they will doubtless develop further.

The Scout's store cupboard is leaking badly, and electrical wiring could be compromised.

There was a local power outage over the Christmas period.

A number of controls and checks must take place before any maintenance is carried out on diocesan property. The rules are very strict. In addition, since ours is a listed building, there are many other rules and restrictions which apply.

Lighting in the church will have to be done in no more than two years' time.

All regular contractors will be subject to review: gardeners, window cleaners, organ and piano tuners etc will all need to be looked at for potential savings.

There is currently a leakage problem in the gents' toilets in the hall. They are also flushing continuously. A plumber will be engaged, and the company responsible for managing the flushing unit will be called in to replace it.

The hall heating system simply is not fit for purpose.

Hall furniture upstairs is old and does not comply with modern safety standards. It was put in when we had the club. There are no fire resistance labels, and we need to look at whether or not there is some kind of fire certificate which covers this. DGP remarked that, given the recent Grenfell Tower fire, we should all be taking fire safety very seriously. Should there not be a green fire escape sign above the door to the "snug" where the furniture referred to is situated?

GCL remarked that all those who signed for keys also signed up to acknowledgement of the fire regulations and to following those regulations.

GCO questioned whether or not the thurible was deemed safe, as it could easily get very hot, and there were no built in heat resistant parts, such as we have at home when using saucepans or ovens.

Plans are underway to make both Hepworth and Glencairn Roads one way. This tends to raise the probability of speeding, as motorists will have the road without traffic coming from the opposite direction. FRD remarked about the difficulties we have with hearses in particular not being able to park legally and/or near the church. Whilst we can put cones on the pavement, in the hope of discouraging parking, we cannot put them in the road itself. Whether or not a one way system will help in this respect remains to be seen.

9/ CORPUS CHRISTI PROCESSION – The proposed date is 3rd June 2018, which is Corpus Christi itself. The Friends of Norbury Park might be able to help out with our proposed Benediction in Norbury Park. They would actually sort out all the necessary approval. A gazebo could be erected for Benediction. We could process after we have gathered. It would be easier overall than processing to Streatham Common. We could consider having this event immediately after the 11:30 Mass that day. Hopefully this would make it easier for more children to attend.

10/ STATIONS OF THE CROSS – TF will organise the various groups to lead the Stations each Friday. Perhaps the PPC can lead the first one on Friday February 16th 2018. A timetable will be drawn up in due course.

11/ PARISH FUNDRAISING – Due to time constraints, this item is to be deferred until the next meeting. Advice may be sought from the diocese as to how we can go about effective fundraising, as well as any sources of finance available to us. Whilst there are various grants available nationally, these are generally very restricted, with certain criteria having to be met for each.

12/ PARISH WEB SITE – Due to time constraints, this item is to be deferred until the next meeting. TP is happy for anybody to email him as Web Master with any comments, suggestions or questions.

13/ A DAY WITH MARY – This is set for Saturday 17th February 2018. It promises to be a very well attended event. FD noted that such an occasion has never even been hosted at St George's Cathedral. This will be our first time, and it will be interesting to see how it goes.

14/ ANY OTHER BUSINESS –

LN advised that the UCM Day of Recollection will take place on Friday 23rd February 2018. Posters will be put in the porch areas.

TOD announced that the collection at the Polyphony Choir Concert just before Christmas raised a total of £380.00. The SVP has registered with the Tressel Trust Foodbank, with their unit based in West Norwood.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING – WEDNESDAY 7TH FEBRUARY 2018

(NB 14th February is Ash Wednesday and Valentines Day.)

The meeting closed at 21:50 with a blessing from FRD.