

Our Lady of Mercy & St Joseph Catholic Church, Lymington

Minutes of Parish Pastoral Council Meeting

Wednesday 25th May 2022

Present

Fr David
Magdalen Chadbourn
Olivia Cowan
Linda Guilding
Pete Lawes
Cathryn Lawrence
Vicki Pent- arrived later
Eileen Rayner
Mike Reynolds
Keith Stuttaford
Rini Stuttaford

Apologies

None

Opening Prayer

Fr David led the opening prayer

Minutes of the previous meeting

The Minutes of the PPC meeting on 28th April 2022 were accepted.

Matters arising

1 : PPC role and purpose

Bishop Philip introduced Evangelisation Strategy Teams hoping it would replace PPC's. Fr D keeping PPC.

PPC Diocesan document suggests more prayer time at the start of the meeting

ACTION: Fr D

ER – CWL have decade of Rosary before & after meeting

Fr D referred to MD's presentation on discernment. Listening to God and the Holy Spirit over important decisions.

The PPC enables the parish to:

- + Develop worship
- + Catechesis
- + Pastoral support
- + Ecumenical dimensions- where we can interact with them

The PPC is not a Finance Committee. The PPC may make decisions which have implications for finance but it's not a deciding authority. The PPC instructs finance, not the other way around.

Constraints:

- + Can't change some positions of the Catholic church
- + You are under the guidance of the Bishop and have to respond to the initiatives he generates.
- + Administrative/financial constraints

2 : Diocesan 10-year plan

We await the outcome of the 10 year Strategy Plan.

What follows is a summary of a detailed discussion of our own finances/building project and an explanation of the reasons behind the restrictions.

The Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth is a Charity and as such has to be compliant to Charity Law. Every parish has to be compliant with GDPR, Safeguarding, Finance and Health & Safety. Responsible for the upkeep of parish properties.

Church Law is Canon Law and under Canon Law the parish has right to its assets and to maintain those assets.

Charity Law overrides Canon Law. To the Charity Commissioners the Diocese is one entity. They benefit being a Charity- Gift Aid and not being liable for taxation.

The Diocese has authority over our financial decisions.

At the moment parishes who are in the black can use £5,000 twice a year on essential maintenance. Parishes who are in the red can spend up to £2,500 twice a year on essential maintenance. We are in the black, so can spend up to £5,000. The latest was that we can only spend up to those amounts with permission of Diocesan Trustees.

66 parishes are in the red.

23 parishes are in the black.

The 23 are keeping other parishes afloat.

The money for our Building Fund is ring fenced.

KS: Proposed we need to make parish aware that the lack of progress with the building project is not our fault, but as a result of the financial restrictions imposed on all parishes by the Diocese to keep the Diocese financially solvent.

KS: We need to know how long these restrictions will go on for. Fr D suggested we have to wait until the diocese publishes its 10-year Strategy Plan.

POST MEETING: *The Bishop has called all the clergy to a meeting on 13th July to discuss the 10yr Strategy plan so far. The final document is due to be published to the parishes in the Autumn. Date not yet known.*

The Diocesan Trustees are responsible for all buildings within the Charity. They have to be maintained properly but they also must not allow unwise expenditure. They have to follow all the rules and regulations set down by the Charity Commission. Covid hit all parishes financially and the Diocese is recovering. There is a new fund-raising campaign being rolled out now to all parishes in the Diocese, the 'Closer to Christ' campaign. The Diocese hoping to raise £13 million from this campaign.

When maintenance is completed, it was felt that PPC needs to let the parish know via the newsletter- 'The latest news is this'. For example, the bill for the latest electrical repairs was in the region of £3,000.

ACTION: Fr D

KS: Pre Covid the costs for our building project was in the region of £300,000. After 2year hiatus with Covid, & now restrictions over the amount of money available to spend on maintenance, not repairs/replacement the costs will inevitably rise & the buildings will deteriorate further.

ACTION LG : as Finance rep to ask Finance committee to explain what is to be done in detail for our building project- The Work Package. E.G. define what is meant by roof repairs.

There is a Quinquennial report and also an electrical survey every 5 years. These documents pinpoint work to be done and the time frame.

The windows in the presbytery are in poor condition and half a window at the top of the house has fallen out, luckily not onto the street. Glass above the front door fell inside when windows being washed. Several windows can't be opened. Identified as H & S hazard. Suggestion Diocese made aware of this.

ACTION: Fr D to email Diocese.

3: Synod

The Synod Feedback was handed out and KS, RS & PL thanked for the enormous amount of work they did to get to this end stage.

For next meeting- a look at the feedback and see what is reasonable, desirable, can't be done and can be done.

4. Jubilee preparation

One item from the Synod feedback was to try to recreate community after the Covid years. A Jubilee party was suggested. So far 40 had signed up to attend and to bring food to share. Everything was in place. Tables outside, food inside. No cars in car park.

ACTION: LG to email everyone to remind them.

5. Parish Finance and PPC AGM

At this meeting the Finance Committee & PPC report back to the parish. 31 August is the end of the Financial Year. The accounts have to be in to the Diocese by October. Suggestion AGM is end of October early November. May have news of the 10-year Strategy Plan and how it will affect our parish.

ACTION: Fr D- date for AGM to be set

6. Welcoming

Suggestion: with their permission- put names of new parishioners in newsletter and welcome them to Mass, so they feel part of the community.

ACTION: Fr D

Pre Covid LG would send a postcard to new parishioners welcoming them to the parish and giving info on times of Mass, contact telephone number. The new parishioner fills in a form, it goes to the office to enter data. If they tick any boxes of interest on the form eg. flower arranging LG contacts the person who leads that group and the group leader contacts the person directly.

Fr D has in the past asked people to say Hello to the person next to them and to introduce themselves, possibly at 'Sign of peace'.

ACTION: Fr D

Stewards have now transitioned to Welcomers.

Further discussion re- welcoming people at church and at coffee after Mass Sunday. Be proactive.

Should we, as a parish, have a set of values to adhere to?

How can we reach out to the young people in the parish?

Fr D and Linda, who is school-parish link, doing a lot more with the school.

2 yr 6 pupils hoping to speak after Mass (date tbc) about School of Sanctuary.

Parishioners seem to like the school news in our parish newsletter.

8. A.O.B

8 (i) Splitting Communion front & back

This was done to help as we came out of Covid. Fr D doesn't see those parishioners in the 'back half'. He will reinstate everyone goes to the front to receive holy communion. Masks no longer compulsory but can still be worn in parishioners wish to do so. Minister for communion to assist at front.

8 (ii) Welcomers and Readers

If a Welcomer/Reader cannot attend Mass on their duty day they email or ring others to see if a swop can be arranged. This is now causing problems. The Welcomers don't know if someone has swapped duty. 15 mins before Mass starts the Reader should let the Welcomers know they are present, this isn't happening, so the Welcomer assumes the Reader isn't present and approaches another Reader to stand in. The problem arises if the absent Reader has arranged with someone else to stand in but hasn't alerted the office so the rota can be changed in the Sacristy. Recently we've had no Reader at one Mass and at another 2 or 3 Readers thinking they are Readers covering for someone else! It is causing great confusion.

ACTION: Fr D to email all Readers and Welcomers asking if they swop duties could they let the office know.

8 (iii) Altar Servers: Fr D is happy to carry on as altar servers have not returned since Covid.

8 (iv) Sacristy duty: Fr D happy to carry on.

When planning AGM mention Sacristan duties to parish.

ACTION :PL to inform Welcomers what is required to check before Mass.

8 (v) Foodbank

OC to get a list of items Foodbank needs so collection box can be set up.

ACTION: OC

Dates for next PPC meetings:

21st July

22nd September

24th November

19th January 2023

16th March

18th May

ACTION POINTS BEFORE NEXT PPC MEETING 21ST JULY

Item 1: Fr D: expanding prayer time at the start of the meeting

Item 2: Fr D: Newsletter : 'the latest news is...' & letting parish know financial implications

Item 2: Fr D to email Diocese re presbytery windows being H&S hazard

Item 2: LG to report back to Finance Committee at their next meeting

Item 4: LG to email party goers

Item 5: Fr D to set date for the AGM end Oct/early Nov

Item 6: Fr D to welcome newcomers via newsletter/during Mass

Item 6: Fr D to ask people to introduce themselves to neighbour at Sign of Peace

Item 8 (ii): D to email all Readers and Welcomers asking if they swop duties could they let the office know.

Item 8 (iv) PL to inform Welcomers what is required to check before Mass

Item 8(v) OC to get list from Foodbank