

Our Lady of Mercy & St Joseph Catholic Church, Lymington

Minutes of Parish Pastoral Council Meeting

Thursday 22nd September 2022

Present

Fr David
Magdalen Chadbourn
Linda Guilding
Pete Lawes
Cathryn Lawrence
Vicki Pent
Eileen Rayner
Mike Reynolds
Keith Stuttaford
Rini Stuttaford

Apologies

Olivia Cowan

Opening Prayer

Fr David led with a Bible reading and an opening prayer

Election of a Chairperson.

Fr David thanked Mike Reynolds for his previous term of office as Chair of the Lymington PPC.

Fr David proposed Magdalen Chadbourn as Chair and was seconded by Linda Guilding. Magdalen was voted in by the rest of the PPC members as the new Chair of Lymington PPC.

Magdalen has been a parishioner at OLMSJ since 2006. She gave a summary of her 30 years working with M&S and of her transferable skills. She thanked the PPC and asked for their support as we move forward and engage with the Diocesan 10 year plan.

Minutes arising from the previous meeting

The Minutes of the PPC meeting on 25th May 2022 were accepted with one amendment.

Matters arising

1: PPC role and purpose

ER- CWL have a decade of the Rosary before the meeting & after meeting should read- & three Hail Mary's at the end of the meeting.

1) Matters arising

Item 1: *Fr D: expanding prayer time at the start of the meeting.* Yes. Ongoing.

Item 2: *Fr D: Newsletter: 'the latest news is...' & letting parish know financial implications.* The Financial Year End was the end of August and FW is working on the accounts to present to the Diocese. When this has been completed, they can be shared with the parish at the forthcoming AGM scheduled for Sunday 6th November after 10.30am Mass.

Item 2: *Re presbytery windows.*

Fr David is hoping for repairs to the windows this autumn. An experienced carpenter, Gerry, has been working at Scott Bailey Solicitors building, which is also Listed. He has seen the presbytery windows and will be working on them shortly. He shall initially work on the door and its surrounds and then work his way through repairing & reconditioning the downstairs windows. This is considered essential maintenance. It will be a sympathetic repair in the same colour.

When work starts Fr D will put a piece in the newsletter 'You will notice work has begun on sympathetic repairs to the door and some windows of the presbytery...'

Action: Fr David

Post meeting: Fr D received an email from Liza Smith, the new Grants & Trusts Officer. The former Fundraising Manager briefed her on some enquiries made by Parishes looking to develop projects in the short term. He mentioned that Lymington Parish were seeking funding for replacement windows. Was this something Fr David was aware of?

We initially asked-as we are not allowed to spend any money are there any grants for repairing the windows of our Listed building?

Fr David will speak with her & expand on this.

Action: Fr David

Item 2: *LG to report back to ask Finance committee* to explain to PPC what is to be done in detail for the building project. There has not been a Finance meeting recently, but there will be one scheduled to look at and sign off the financial report for the Diocese.

Action: Fr David

Item 5: *Date for AGM-* Sunday 6th November after 10.30am Mass.

The next PPC is November 24th so there will have to be a planning meeting prior to this date: tbc.

Action: Fr David & Chair

Item 6: *Welcome new parishioners via newsletter/during Mass.*

New parishioners have to be identified. There is a poster asking new parishioners to introduce themselves to Stewards at Mass. Stewards will offer a New Parishioner Form.

There was a discussion as to how new parishioners could be made welcome. It was decided Fr David would ask everyone to introduce themselves to others around them before Mass. If there were any new parishioners at 10.30am Mass, they could be encouraged to go over to Joseph's Place for refreshments. Suggestion: a get together to welcome new parishioners, maybe a coffee morning or a Newcomers supper.

Item 8 (ii): *Fr D to email all Readers and Welcomers could they let the office know if they swap duties so the rota in the Sacristy can be amended.*

This has been done but not all are doing what has been asked.

Item 8 (iv): *Update Welcomers list of what is required to do before Mass.*

This has been done.

Item 8 (v): *OC to get a list of requirements from Foodbank.*

This has been done, advertised in the Newsletter and a box available in the porch.

A.O.B- Noted now and discussed after agenda items have been addressed.

The future of Children's Liturgy.

2) Cost of Energy: The parishioners need to know how the Energy crisis will affect them. And how we can heat church, Joseph's Place & presbytery due to budgetary restraints.

Fr D has put things in place to reduce heating in the presbytery- reducing length of time hot water is on, reduce temperature, bubble wrap on windows, heating off until necessary, then reduce temperature. Coats!

The Business deal announced by the government in the mini budget includes Churches. It will be in place for 6 months and any refund will go to the parish. A discussion took place re keeping the church warm v keeping windows open as a precaution against Flu and Covid which is anticipated both will be on the rise in the winter.

CL pointed out that the hospitals are no longer keeping windows open.

Some heating has to be kept on to prevent damp and there is a frost protection system in place.

Decision: Close church windows and windows in Joseph's Place. Welcomers to be informed.

Heating to go on before and during Mass but adjust thermostat down.

Frost protection on.

Fr D to give parishioners permission to wear hats, gloves, bring blankets-

whatever they feel they need to keep warm at Mass. **ACTION: Fr David**

3) Draft Diocesan Strategy Plan

The future of Lymington parish- finding a way forward.

Fr David explained that each of our 3 parishes needs to do what it can to come to a decision about its future *before* we are tasked with the pastoral area coming together as one parish.

What steps do we need to take?

Do we maintain this church or look at other options?

As was proposed in 2006, do we sell this site and look at a new church building?

Why are we having this discussion?

According to the Diocesan Strategy plan all churches in the New Forest- except Totton who, because of a change to the boundary, will be joining Southampton- will have assets and money centralised.

How will we provide for Catholics in this area?

How will we provide the Sacraments?

As regards OLMSJ- what is best for us here?

Keep the church and maintain it or sell the site and build a new church? Both suggestions will come with considerable challenges.

An in-depth discussion followed bringing up several issues which needed further investigation.

When the PPC's at St Anne's and St Francis have had similar discussions then a steering group with representatives from all three parishes will be formed to take the discussions further.

N.B.

Following the helpful discussion at the PPC meeting Father David has reflected on the options and come to the conclusion that with all the restrictions from the Diocese and the current circumstances that we would not be able to proceed with any changes to the buildings, potential relocation, or options to sell. There is too much uncertainty, and we would be extremely unlikely to be given permission by the Diocese.

Father David and the Chair have agreed therefore not to ask the members of the PPC to consider options as had been suggested at the meeting and the PPC will be asked to concentrate on the other recommendations in the Ten-Year Plan. This will be included in the next agenda.

However, if anyone does come up with a possible way forward, all suggestions will be gratefully received.

4) PPC MEETING DATES :

AGM Date

It was also noted that an extra meeting was needed prior to the AGM on the 6th November to prepare. *

ACTION: Chair

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 24th November*

PLEASE NOTE: The PPC meeting scheduled for 18th May 2023 has been changed to 1st June 2023.

The meeting finished with a prayer at 8.30pm