

**PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL
OUR LADY'S CHURCH ACOMB, and
ST JOSEPH'S CHURCH, GREEN HAMMERTON**

3rd December 2017 AGM Minutes

Present: John Kesterton* (Chair), Maggie Cockett, Margaret Snowden, Ann Snowden, Marian Docherty, Maureen Potter, Patricia Ashby, Clare Palmer, Maura Mullen, Lyndsey Spendelow, Claire Young*, Amanda Sturdy*, Gareth Morgan, Rosemary Phizackerley*, Megi Rychlikova, Hazel Kesterton, Dave Palmer, Giles Nightingale*, Marek Lichtarowicz*, Kath Lyall*, Nan Saeki*, Frank Fiorentini, Sebastian Rowe, Anna Rowe, Johan Bergstrom-Allen, David Copeland*, DC Simon McGough, Fr Tony Lester* (President)

Apologies were received from Rebecca Kramm*, David Barber*. Meeting opened at 11.00.

1 Fr Tony opened with a prayer

See below for text of reports.

2 Introduction and Welcome: The Chair welcomed all and PPC members were introduced. They are shown in the attendance list with an “ * ”. There was an open invitation for expressions of interest to join PPC

a. Chair's Report. As attached.

This highlighted the regular attention to engagement and evangelisation. Progress has been made on Accessibility and there is still more to do. There is a new team for First Holy Communion preparation, and a new hymn Supplement has been produced.

Discussion included: reiteration that we are still learning as a PPC and not to misunderstand if it all sounds very organized and professional! Ways to introduce new catechists, readers and so forth to be considered. How are such lists of contributors shared? Ensure Parish website is up to date re names of priests. **PPC to re-visit**

b. Financial Statement. As attached.

Discussion included: Grateful for transparency. Clarification of scale of Diocesan contribution as set by the Diocese. Much repair of fabric of buildings this past year, perhaps disproportionate. Does Finance Committee set a budget? Is there Financial Expertise on the Committee? Can we encourage, and how are Gift Aid contributions encouraged; and mindful of increased personal allowances, maintained as accurate? Small donations also receive relief. PP stipend noted and explained as standard across York.

Finance Committee to respond.

c. SVP. As attached.

Highlight concern at closure of Windsor House and residents already moving out – i.e. but where to? Some question over status of decision, CYC decision 7 Dec? Food bank – Christmas Fare requested. Good to see Food Bank donations coming up in Offertory Procession.

- d. First Holy Communion Group. As attached.

The new team is finding its way and is conscious of numbers of families not already attached to the parish and the accompanying role of evangelization. Fr Tony noted that children had been very well prepared for First Reconciliation last year, all clergy present had noted this.

- e. Care for our Common Home. As attached.

More help with work in garden environment always welcome! Sustainable Christmas leaflets circulated at Masses today.

- f. Youth Group. As attached.

Several activities, very positive feedback on behaviour from Energise after our visit.

Discussion included: What happens for 15 and overs? Aim is to bring older teens through the group to become helpers/leaders. Had there been a teen Mass? Lourdes helper team do gather in Middlesbrough.

PPC to revisit

- g. Music in the Liturgy. As attached.

Discussion included: Contact with school(s) to encourage young people to become involved. Ensure the Liturgy Meetings are listed in Bulletin. Much to celebrate in all our music and musicians. Music Group certainly always keen to incorporate new members.

Fr. Tony at school and PPC

4 Parish Priest Report. (Verbal)

Tony began as PP on 1.9.17 with just KM at the university and TL in Acomb. The Carmelite Community is reduced but remains committed to being in York. First experience of Parish responsibility has been as challenging and as exciting as would be expected, meeting with as many key people and groups as possible.

High point was the Harvest Festival, seeing Youth Group involved and such generosity from the parish. The Food Bank collections now continue the theme and reflect the origins of the procession of the gifts. The Parish is in good heart, very inclusive, visitors note the number of children and young people we have.

The Welcome Statement has been strongly supported by the Parish, and is being well publicized. Tony reflected his thanks for everyone's welcome to him!

From PPC and Readers' meetings recently, the aim would be – over time – to combine those groups that feed into Liturgy and reflect the ages present in the parish – perhaps younger readers and Ministers as an example? Give young people a voice in the parish?

Accessibility is a focus with some unable to use the steps to the Sanctuary imposing unacceptable limitations on who can be a server or reader etc. Lectern and Chair will need adjustment to facilitate wheelchair access as well. Perhaps Gift Aid income could be overtly targeted at addressing this?

With fewer Carmelites in the York community at present and a focus on the Priory in Aylesford and the south of England, we have had to adapt our Christmas cycle and will be sharing this via website and newsletter soon. (Christmas Eve 1600 St Joseph's, 1800 Our Lady's with Nativity, Carols and First Mass and 1000 Christmas Day at Our Lady's)

Comments included strong welcome and appreciation for Tony's quick settling in and warm thanks for his Ministry. Numbers of priests would improve if there were to be wider access to Vocations, we can both lobby and pray.

PPC to revisit

5 Parish Questions

Much has been covered and one remaining question was for an opportunity to light candles at/after Mass for the dead. **Fr. Tony.**

Johan described the Carmelite Spirituality group meeting at Our Lady's and invited anyone interested to come.

With thanks to all for their work and contributions today and over the year, the meeting was closed at 12.10.

Chair's Annual Report for Parish AGM 3.12.17

The Parish Pastoral Council has now been established for 2 years and meets on a bi-monthly basis with a summer break, typically giving 5 meetings a year.

Through 2017 we have heard reports and discussed wide ranging matters:

- Engagement and evangelization – how to bring more parishioners into involvement with parish events as well as spreading the Word.
- Youth Group activity has developed and gone from strength to strength
- Children and Toddlers – a new Mass cycle has developed a social group
- Care for our Common Home – has delivered activities and made leaflet information and re-cycling available to all
- Accessibility - a new rail at the side entrance, new signage and lighting arrangements have happened and we continue to talk about improving accessibility in and around the churches. In February we heard a presentation by Lynda Corker from PACT.
- New Catechist Team for First Holy Communion and a new pattern of meetings and preparation saw a group of 39 make their first communions this summer.
- Music in the Liturgy – following our survey of 2016, a new supplemental booklet of hymns has been developed and a rota of varying amounts of music and singing of hymns has been thoroughly trialled.
- Change in the Carmelite Community – led to Fr Kevin's departure for a new role at the University and the arrival of Fr Tony at Our Lady's from the University.

Fr Tony met with the PPC Chair as he started his new role and faced an information explosion as welcome to his first time as a Parish Priest. There is so much to find out and learn about and the Parish has welcomed Fr Tony enthusiastically and with great warmth.

Harvest Festival in September showed how generous parishioners can be and showed the collaboration across the parish groups and Masses in both worship, activity and charitable donation.

PPC received Fr Tony's proposals for Welcome and responded with suggestions and positive feedback. In November we launched our Parish Welcome message with readings, cards and posters. We have been delighted to have been able to encourage new and former attenders to join our community, whether for the first time ever or the first time in a long time. Our work now is to keep the arms of welcome open to all.

We are looking for new members and for new active participants especially. Our work has become a Hub or Conduit for Parish activity and we aim to build a full and wide understanding of all there is to be part of in Our Lady's and St Joseph's.

John Kesterton
Chair 2017

Financial Report

Explanation of some of the headings used:

Property Maintenance:	Repairs, decorating and alterations to property, also purchase of equipment and repair.
Establishments Costs:	Electricity, gas, water, tax, gardening costs and hire of equipment.
Administration:	Printing, stationary, postage, telephone, photocopying, books, registration fees, accountancy and legal charges, leasing of office equipment, payment for parish worker, courses, retreats, seminars and supply priests.
Domestic supplies:	Food and general household costs.
Travel:	Mileage allowance to priest and lay workers in relation to their work and public transport costs for the same.
Church requisites:	Bread, wine, candles, mass sheets etc.
Payment for Services:	Window cleaner, organist etc.
Diocesan Assessment:	Each parish pays a levy (tax) each year to the Diocese to fund the central administration costs.

Our Lady's Acomb
Statement of Income and Expenditure 2016
Prepared for Parish AGM

RECEIPTS 2016	
Collections:	
- Gift Aid	40,639.03
- Not Gift aid/ Loose Plate	25,323.46
Donations received	2,635.00
Gift Aid refunds (includes £4,428.04 owed from 2015)	15,773.33
Stole fees (funerals, baptisms, weddings)	4,290.00
Interest received from Diocese	1257.42
Fund raising (200 club – coffee after Mass etc)	7,308.31
Piet stall, candles, catholic papers	3,028.31
Hire of Parish Hall	3,900.50
Other income	201.15
Second collections:	
- Diocesan	1,556.79
- Other	8,167.30
Total Income 2016	£114,080.60
PAYMENTS 2016	
Property Maintenance and Repairs	20,614.89
Establishments Costs	15,140.22
Administration	17,295.40
Domestic Supplies	6,821.35
Travel and Motor Expenses	1,967.85
Church Requisites	4,758.40
Priest's stipend and National Insurance	6,696.75
Payment for services	1,607.63
Diocesan Assessment (Tax)	29,976.00
Fund Raising Expenses	5,000.00
Piety Stall, Papers, Candles	828.20
Other Payments	210.00
Second Collections:	
- Diocesan (includes collections owed to Diocese)	5159.29
- Other	7614.98
Total Expenditure 2016	£123,690.96
Excess Expenditure over Income:	-£9610.36
Cash Balance at bank	£75,000.00

SVP: Notes for PPC meeting 20th November 2017

Recently three of the people we visit have died. George Lowe, Ethel Faul and Win Blackburn. It is very sad only getting to know people when they are in their late 80s and are frail. However, you do get an idea of what they were like in their prime as they usually love to talk about their youth. We shall miss them – RIP.

Sr Lindsay told me of someone she knew who was in some distress because of benefits not coming and we were able to provide him initially with food from the church then he was given food vouchers and we have also offered money but Sr wants to wait until she sees him again to see if his money has come through.

I am in contact with the school and have told them we have £100 to give to each of five families in need but they have not got back to me yet. It is not easy to distinguish which families would like the money obviously at this time of year lots of people would like extra cash but we do really want it to go to the most deserving families. If you know of anyone please let me know. It is all done very discretely.

Westfield school hold a Christmas party for the elderly in Acomb and we have once again been given 10 tickets. I have been inviting some of our congregation and organising lifts. It is a good afternoon out. Unfortunately, All Saints have just given SVP an invitation for 5 people to go to their Christmas party just days after the Westfield School party and I don't think our elderly will want to do two parties within days of each other. Bad timing.

Two of our members have been going for years to Windsor House to visit everyone there. We have been informed that the home is closing very soon and they have already started to place the people in other homes. It is very sad that so many homes are closing and not being replaced.

We have been sponsoring an Indian student for the last three years who is training to become a doctor. She has two more years to go.

We are still looking for people for our members to visit so if you know of anyone please let Fr Tony know.

First Holy Communion 2017/2018

Over 2 weekends in June last year, almost 40 children made their First Holy Communion as part of our parish. This year we have 28 children who are currently participating in the sessions working towards a celebration date of June the 2nd.

After taking feedback from the parents in the last cycle, and taking into consideration comments regarding the need for families where both parents are working full time to have some free time together, it was felt that it would be better to extend the timing of the program, beginning in September. The children attend approximately one meeting a month and lead the celebration of the mass through liturgy and song after every third session. The sessions continue to be led by Kath Sargent and Marek Lichtarowicz, supported by Marie Robson and John Kesterton, who leads the musical preparation.

The children have attended their first 4 sessions and led their first mass on Sunday, 12th November.

The team were reflecting on the sessions on regularly last year and met together in the summer to come up with a longer term plan which has helped there to be more consistency and flow between the sessions. This now allows for the children to be introduced to different aspects of the mass at the start of each session, deepening and consolidating their understanding of what is taking place. The use of mass booklets, which allow them to follow along with what is happening has also been very useful. It was felt that there needed to be a focus on stories leading the themes of the sessions (mostly readings from the Bible) and that a variety of activities should be provided which allow for discussion and group work to further develop the relationships between the children, their adults and the catechists.

A rota of parent helpers has also been set up. Parents are asked to attend one session to support with the children and then another to support with the preparation of refreshments. There are also a number of parents who have volunteered to stay for every session.

The group are happy and eager to learn and this year promises to be a great success.

Care for our Common Home Group AGM Report

We reported at our last AGM on this group, inspired by Pope Francis' *Laudato Si* on care for the environment, climate change and its connection with poverty in the world.

Our aim is to find ways we can respond and act both today and for the future health of the planet. We have begun simply with our own church garden which for the past year has been well-looked after by Frank Fiorentini, Fr Kevin and a small team of parishioners, guided by Roger Barham. Apart from the planting of the mulberry tree last year, the biggest achievement has been the planting of 180 bulbs and several donated plants. The next task is to clean up some of the less beautiful areas such as the overgrown patch behind the fence to the left of the main church doors. We have now acquired a compost bin.

Two members of our team plan to train as bee-keepers but the picture has changed slightly as Fr Tony brought his own bees with him so there is no rush to get another hive. However, it is important to provide bee-friendly plants.

In the summer, we had a visit from a parishioner whose parish had followed the Live Simply programme, created by Cafod. We find that the aims of this programme are very much the same as our Care for our Common Home programme – including re-cycling, cutting down on waste, surveying the energy we use. Boxes for recycling plastic pens, and the trigger tops of soap containers are in the porch, under the *Laudato Si* notice board and there is also a box for used stamps.

We will welcome more helpers in the garden, especially towards the spring and summer.

Youth Group Report for AGM

The Youth Group meets once every 6 weeks on a Sunday afternoon in the Parish hall.

We (Claire Young, Amanda Sturdy, Rebecca Kramm and Joe Dale) have run a variety of activities, this year, for the youth of the parish. These have included crafts, team activities, Christmas and Easter activities, den building, planting, outdoor games and our last meeting was a visit to the climbing wall at Energise.

The group are very grateful to the Parish for part funding this last event. The members have also participated in the Harvest Sunday evening mass.

We have enthusiastic members who currently vary in age from 10 to 14. We are working on recruiting new helpers, some youth leaders and new younger members too. The members are also planning on supporting charities by baking, selling plants, they have grown and running a coffee morning after Sunday morning mass.

Our Lady's Church Music Liturgy Group.

Annual Report to the Parish Pastoral Council AGM.

1. The purpose of this group is to select appropriate hymns, Mass settings and other music for all our Church services, and to roster the musicians and cantors for each service, for both Our Lady's and St. Joseph's churches.
2. Whilst anyone is welcome to attend our meetings, in practice the normal team is Nan Saeki, Carol Brown, Margaret Snowden, and David Copeland.
3. We usually meet on the penultimate Thursday of each month, after the 09:30 Mass. (But if you want to join us, please check beforehand the actual date with one of this group as we have to vary from time to time!) We then plan the music for all services during the following month.
4. Music is chosen considering the theme of each service, the associated scripture readings, and any special commemoration on that day. To assist us in this task we use a Liturgy Planner, published by Decani Music, the Catholic company that publishes 'Laudate', and administers the 'Calamus' copyright licence. The parish also holds a CCLI copyright licence.
5. We seek and will always welcome new musicians; for our organ, for the Music Group, and for leading the sung Psalm. You do not need to be an organist to play the organ. If you can play the piano, then the organ can adjust so that you do not have to use the foot pedals to obtain the deep bass sounds.

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