

## Our Lady's & St. Joseph's AGM 24<sup>th</sup> March 2019

### Agenda item 7

#### **Parish Priest's Report to the Parish AGM 2018**

The Parish is served by a priest (full-time) and a deacon (part-time).  
The Parish employs a Parish Administrator (part-time).  
The Parish has a safeguarding co-ordinator.  
The Parish has a CAFOD link person.

#### **Pastoral Visits and Meetings**

Whilst most members of the parish only meet their priest and deacon at Saturday/Sunday Mass, the pastoral care of the parish is a full-time job. This is one of the largest parishes in the Diocese; not just in geographic area but in numbers attending Mass. A great deal of my time in the week is spent visiting the sick and taking communion to people in their homes and in what can best be described as pastoral conversations where people normally come to the parish house. Sometimes these conversations are of a sacramental nature (confession), or around preparation for and planning a baptism, wedding, or funeral. Recently I was involved in preparing a case and application for a marriage annulment which took several hours of meetings over a number of visits. This is largely hidden ministry and is, of its nature, confidential and unseen by the parish. However, it should be noted that this area of ministry can rarely be planned for and, by its nature, it often needs to take priority, and sometimes other priorities move into second place.

#### **Statistics for 2018**

Baptisms	26
First Holy Communions	30
Confirmations (young adults)	8
Reception of adults into the Church	4
Weddings	4
Funerals	22

#### **The Parish is well resourced by very committed teams of volunteers:**

Parish Pastoral Council  
Musicians (organists and a music ministry)  
Eucharistic Ministers  
Readers  
Cantors  
Altar servers  
Rainbows and Brownies  
First Communion Programme Catechists  
Confirmation Programme Catechist  
Youth Group Leaders  
RCIA Leaders  
Children's Liturgy Teams

Crèche volunteers  
Flower arrangers  
Church cleaners  
Our Lady's SVP Volunteers  
Sunday morning coffee teams  
Care for our Common Home Group  
Gardening Group  
Parish mums and toddlers  
Life Ascending Group  
Senior citizens keep-fit  
Parish Piety Stall  
Carmelite Spirituality Group

The Parish has a volunteer sacristan and a parishioner who takes care of the sacristy laundry.

### **Prayer, the heartbeat of the parish**

The public worship of the Church, the Eucharist, is celebrated well with a great deal of active participation by the parish community. This is the source of who we are as a Christian community and this reality flows out into the life and mission of the parish. People experience Our Lady's and St. Joseph's as truly welcoming communities where they feel at home. 2018 has seen a number of families with young children chose to make Our Lady's their home. The parish works hard to make people welcome and this is seen in the steady rise in the number of children present, especially at the 9.30am Mass on Sunday. The crèche and the children's liturgy are valuable ministries in the life of our parish community.

Mass is celebrated during the week from Tuesday – Friday with a lay-led service of God's Word and Holy Communion on Mondays. After Easter I plan *ad experimentum* to introduce a Saturday morning Mass to be followed by an hour of availability for confessions, rather than the current half-hour on Sunday evening before Mass.

### **Participation by children/young adults**

We are conscious that there is a lot of involvement in the parish liturgy by children preparing for First Communion which then stops at the end of the programme. We are beginning to involve them in ministries such as reading and the plan is for this to increase

### **Regular outreach projects**

Peru Collection (monthly)  
Fair Trade Stall (monthly)  
Food bank collection (weekly)  
Recycling point (weekly)

## **Songs of Praise**

During 2018 Our Lady's hosted a recording of *Songs of Praise* and hymns recorded here on the night are still being used in broadcasts.

## **Inclusive Church**

During 2018 our application to be registered as an Inclusive Church was accepted and the logo now appears on our weekly newsletter.

## **York College**

The inception of the York College Life and Social Skills Project in September 2018 marked a significant moment in the use of parish resources by the local community, i.e., in how we as a parish can serve our local community. The project meets during the day from Wednesday – Friday in term-time.

The introduction of a Wednesday lunch club for the elderly, provided by the staff and students as a part of their programme, has been welcomed and it draws a number of our parishioners as well as others from the community.

A new kitchen was fitted in the parish hall by Howden's as their contribution to the project and at no cost to the parish.

## **OLQM School**

A lot of work has been done to build stronger links between school and parish and is bearing fruit. Regular weekday class Masses have been introduced. There was a reconciliation service with confessions for year 6 children before Christmas and the same will happen for year 5 children before Easter. There have been two class visits to the church so far this academic year, one looking at baptism and one looking at how we use books and registers in the prayer and in the life of the parish. We are working towards bringing the children to celebrations of Mass in the church on major festivals where they will experience the Mass in its normal context along with other parishioners.

## **Community use of parish resources**

In addition to the York College project the use of our resources by community groups has increased during 2018. Most recently the Fr. Kelly Room has been used by a project helping families in difficulty learn and develop parenting skills. Holgate Scouts will be using the parish hall in April for a fundraising event.

## **Social life**

The Ceilidh on 19th January (planned in 2018) was a great evening and gave an indication of what is possible in how social events can help build up the parish community.

## **Maintenance**

A number of major projects were brought to completion during 2018 with a major item being the repair and renovation of the chapel lighting at Green Hammerton. These are items which were designed and made for the chapel in the 1960s and whose fittings had become unsafe. After quotes it was more economical to repair and renovate the originals rather than purchase new.

A number of other repairs were done to the roof at Green Hammerton internally and externally. Vinyl flooring was fitted in the rear passageway, toilets and sacristy to cover the bare concrete.

At Our Lady's the roof on the parish house (over the sacristy) needed attention inside and out, as did the church roof on both sides with the unblocking of gullies and downpipes. An amount of plaster was removed from the interior walls of the church to allow the walls to begin to dry out – it was noticeable that even at the height of the summer drought there was still damp visible on the interior walls seeping through from water which has penetrated under the tarmac on the roof and which is held there.

We took the opportunity to do some work in the parish hall alongside the fitting of the new kitchen with the addition of a radiator in the kitchen and the fitting of thermostatic valves on the radiators.

Laminate flooring was fitted in the entrance hall and corridor of the parish house. The carpet taken up was fitted in the house of a family in need as a joint project between the parish and Our Lady's SVP.

Following a break-in to a car in the carpark where the recorded CCTV footage was simply unusable, the system was updated with new cameras fitted and a camera installed in the front sitting room of the parish house. Cameras have also been fitted in the sacristy as an additional safeguarding and security measure.

Maintenance is ongoing, and dealing with jobs quickly – rather than leaving them to develop into major problems – saves money. There is still a backlog of work to be done with two major items being the church roof (not the raked section, but the flat roofs on either side) and the tarmacked area at the front of the church where the roots are breaking through and the area will soon become a trip hazard. In addition to this the tarmac in the carpark at the rear is beginning to perish and break-up in parts.

## **Fundraising**

The parish needs a Fundraising Group. As can be seen by the statement of income and expenditure we have, for the last 3 years, spent more than we have received, and this means that reserves are being eaten into. Thankfully we have already received some donations towards the work on the roof. A coordinated effort is now necessary, I believe.