
MINUTES OF THE PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETING

22 April 2015

The following members of the Council were present:

- Father Michael McGreevy
 - Bella Caridade-Ferreira
 - Joe Colairo
 - Patrice Murphy
 - Rudi Pittrof
 - Dina Raouf
 - Michele Reilly
 - Elizabeth Sinclair
 - Will Thompson
 - Bertrand Cliquet
- Robin Landon and Mary-Maye Lorriman were unable to attend.

1. Opening prayer

Father Michael concluded his prayer asking God to guide the reflection of the PPC and prayed to God to help the committee in its mission. Father Michael reminded the PPC of the mission statement of the Parish.

2/ review of minutes

Agreed by everyone.

3/ New Parish Priest and other community member changes

Father Michael rejoiced in the appointment of Fr Richard Reid as Parish priest and Rector of the Redemptorist Community. Father Richard will receive assistance for managing both roles.

All PPC members were happy to learn that Father Michael is to remain in the community. Father David Raju has been appointed to the community as well. He is expected to receive a visa by the end of April. Father David worked in Zimbabwe and South Africa. Father Charles is to remain in charge of the students.

Fr Jim McManus is leaving for Scotland in the Summer. Father Jack is staying. Michael Creech is coming back to the community.

Important upcoming dates:

June 14th Sunday. Bro Peter Morris is being ordained deacon. 12.00 mass.

June 13 Summer Fair. 12.30 mass and Peter's final vows before ordination.

4/ New website. on line since the start of the week.

All PPC members agreed that it was a very warm, inviting and welcoming website.

As the parish endeavours to remain on top of new technologies to communicate, we the community expressed its gratitude to Christelle Colairo, who accepted the responsibility to tweet on behalf of the parish

We are aiming to get a donation button on the website in order to facilitate gift. Today, it is already possible to download a gift aid form. This is good, but we would like to ensure that “impulse” donations may be made. We want also to ensure that any system put in place does not come at the expense of the parish. “Just giving” does not take a commission, for example

5/ Finance committee

The new committee is now well established and has made a lot of progress to review all systems and procedures in place. The Finance committee is contemplating using the “gift wire” software that could enable the parish to receive the 25% tax gift aid tax on a quarterly basis, rather than on annual basis. This would hugely help cash flows.

6/ Spire.

The architect will use the new website to communicate on the extent and progress of the work on the spire. The National Heritage Lottery fund has confirmed its GBP400,000 donation, and National Churches Trust GBP40,000.

The parish will hold an event to help raise fund for the National Churches Trust, in order to help for works on other churches, as our church is currently is benefitting.

Work has started and is expected to complete on November 6th. Father Michael highlighted the craftsmanship involved in the stone by stone restoration of the spire. We will endeavour to communicate with the parish and the local community on the works.

The Cockerel at the top of the Steeple is to be brought down and will be on display outside the church to be re-gilded.

The parish priest and architects will as well organise events with the school.

7/ Communication

The details of the parish Twitter account will be added to the newsletter.

The PPC will as well communicate in an improved way on the church shop offers, opening hours and importantly, location.

More than 150 leaflets brief guide to St Mary's church have been distributed so far. The parish Twitter account and website will be added on those documents as well.

8/ Church routine maintenance.

The church cleaning is now down to only one person, but a thorough spring cleaning is well due. We will as well seek volunteers to tidy up after mass. We will ask for volunteers, but will call and rely on parishioners' discipline to help in this process.

9/ Church condition

St Gerard chapel is in very bad condition, with plaster coming off due to damp on the wall. While the problem causing the damp was resolved, redecoration has yet to take place. The renovation cost is GBP650. A two-week notice is necessary before works can take place. Besides, the PPC identified as the sacristy as the next priority for works. The PPC thinks that further works can only be contemplated once the spire is completed and we have a better assessment of the state of the church after those large-scale works have taken place.

10/ A Charity (Positive Catholics) working with Catholics suffering from aids will be talking at the next meeting. The parish is making a room available to this association so that it can hold its meetings. Archbishop Peter Smith is Patron of this Charity.

11/ Any Other Business

- Update on Hall. The latest details are not yet available, but it seems that the most likely purchaser is London Pre School, and that facilities for parish use will be available.
- Sound system failing in St Gerard chapel: need to be addressed as a priority. The church benefits from a highly sophisticated sound system. The maintenance will need to be reviewed, and there may be users' training issues. Bella's husband, George, offered to assess the system and make a recommendation to improve it.

12/ Dates for next meeting.

The PPC will next meet on May 20th at 19.30