

MINUTES of the 260th meeting of the Parish Pastoral Council held on Tuesday 15th February 2022 at 7.25pm in the Parish Centre.

PRESENT: Father Simon Leworthy, President of the Council, Mrs Josephine Lea, in the Chair, Mrs Maureen Favager, Mrs Carole Kelly, Ms Debbie Kerry, Mrs Gillian Millyard, Mrs Mary Robinson, Mr Allan Scott, Mrs Pat Smith and Mr James Spencer.

APOLOGIES: Ms Rosemary Muntus

ALSO PRESENT: Frank Lea, Clerk to the Council

01/22 OPENING PRAYER: Father Simon formally opened the meeting with a prayer.

02/22 CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME: Jo welcomed everybody to the meeting and introduced Mr James Spencer as a new member of the PPC appointed by Father Simon.

03/22 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: It was agreed that the MINUTES of the 259th meeting of the PPC, held on 7th December 2021 constituted a true record. They were signed and dated by the Chairman.

04/22 MATTERS ARISING: There were none.

05/22 ANY OTHER BUSINESS NOT SCHEDULED ON THE AGENDA: Two items were proposed:

- Jo Lea wished to discuss stewarding at Masses and
- Allan Scott wished to raise CAFOD matters

06/22 PPC MEMBERSHIP: Frank Lea stated that there was currently one vacancy for an elected member of the PPC and that that Father Simon had scope to nominate one further appointee, should he so desire. Elections to the PPC normally took place in October and this year there would be three vacancies, viz, the existing vacancy and the positions currently occupied by Mary Robinson and Pat Smith who would come to the end of their tenures. It was, however, pointed out that both Mary and Pat could seek re-election for a further period of four years. It was agreed that nominations would be sought over the weekends 8/9 and 15/16 October 2022 with elections taking place, if necessary, over the weekend 22/23 October. Frank pointed out that in October 2023 the remaining five elected members of the PPC would formally end their present tenures.

07/22 REPORT FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE: The Vice Chairman reported on the Finance Committee meeting that had taken place on 8th February:

- PREZZO WALL: Simon Millyard was in the process of speaking to the Diocesan Property Advisor, to seek advice and assistance as to the way ahead.
- TIME, TREASURE & TALENTS PROPOSAL: The scripts for the three weeks, commencing on the weekend 12/13 February, had now been agreed although some amendments would be made to the week three presentation. Father Simon would give the first week's address, Simon Millyard the second and Jo Lea the third. The matter of collation of the responses would be undertaken shortly afterwards and it was suggested

that this be a task for the PPC to undertake. The importance of following up the matter of harnessing the 'Talents' offered by the parish was emphasised and it was proposed that this be a major topic for this year's Parish AGM.

- **CHURCH BELLS:** Father Simon shared the estimates he had received. The overall costs were in the region of £15,000. It was certain that the parish as a whole should be consulted on such a large expenditure and it was agreed that the Parish AGM would be a good forum to sound out the opinion of parishioners.
- **PURCHASE OF EXTRA TABLES FOR THE UPPER CHURCH HALL:** It was agreed to purchase three additional tables for use in the Hall. The question was raised about getting a caretaker/booking clerk for the Upper Church Hall. This matter would be addressed once the response from the Triple T appeal was known.
- **SUFFOLK CHURCHES TRUST:** It was agreed that the parish become a member.
- **SIEM REAP:** Frank Lea handed over £250 for our twin parish, Siem Reap in Cambodia. The money had been collected over the past year being the result of proceeds from Coffee after Sunday 8.30am Mass and the sale of Jo's preserves.
- **DATE OF NEXT FINANCE MEETING:** This is to take place on Tuesday 29th March 2022

08/22 DATE OF THE 2022 PARISH AGM: In consultation with Father Simon, it has been agreed that the AGM will take place on Thursday 7th April. This will take place in the Upper Church Hall and will start at 7pm. It was agreed that the meeting be followed by light refreshments, drinks and nibbles. The AGM will be given wide publicity through the newsletter, notice boards and the parish website.

09/22 DIOCESAN COUNCIL OF LAITY: The next meeting will take place on Saturday 14th May 2022.

10/22 DEANERY COUNCIL OF LAITY: The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 23rd March 2022

11/22 CHURCHES TOGETHER: Carole Kelly reported on the major items from the meeting held on 12th January:

- The Good Friday Walk of Witness will take place on Friday 15th April starting at 11am from the Old Post Office. Further details to follow.
- Plans for the Community Fun Day, Saturday 27th August 2022, are well in hand. A further planning meeting is to be held at 6pm on Thursday 5th May in the Parish Church. It was likely that Our Lady's contribution would again be the serving of cream teas. Carole Kelly, Pat Smith and Jo Lea will attend the planning meeting.
- It was notified that the Food Bank had obtained funding for Rough Sleepers, although none, as yet, have been identified.
- It was also reported that the Food Bank could assist with necessities for the Afghan refugees currently housed in the Cedars Hotel, but it was known that there was ample funding from other sources at the present time.
- Next meeting of the group will take place on Wednesday 11th May 2022.

12/22 THE SYNODAL PATHWAY: Pat Smith stated that the project had been completed and all returns and summaries had been sent to the diocese. She thanked the team that had helped her with the work and Jo read out the covering letter Pat had sent with the returned material. The Chairman proposed a formal vote of thanks to Pat for her considerable efforts in undertaking the work that the Synodal Pathway had created. This was roundly supported by the meeting.

13/22 TIME, TREASURE & TALENTS: This project was now into its second week. It was pointed out that much of the information being gleaned from the scheme replicated that undertaken by Gillian Millyard in 2019, but this was a diocese backed project and had to be followed through. Father Simon had started with Week 1, Simon Millyard was doing Week 2 and Jo Lea would be delivering Week 3. It was again pointed out that this was **not** a follow up to Alive in Faith, although there would be some mention of finances.

Collation of the returns would need to be undertaken and the Finance Committee had suggested this might be a task for the PPC. After discussion Gillian Millyard agreed to lead in compiling the collation. Maureen Favager and James Spencer volunteered their assistance.

There followed discussion about getting the information and handouts to members of the parish who might not be at any of the Masses when the project was promoted. Allan Scott said that if he could have digital copies of the three handouts, he would then forward them to absent parishioners and Father Simon agreed to give Allan details to enable him to contact Mrs Sandra Portas, the Diocesan Stewardship & Fundraising Coordinator.

14/22 REPORT FROM THE PASTORAL GROUP: Gillian Millyard reported. She stated that the next Mass for the Sick, Housebound and Elderly would take place on Monday 21st March 2022 at 3pm; this would be followed by afternoon tea as in the past. She would be sending out invitations towards the end of February and would be enlisting help as regards picking up and catering.

15/22 REPORT FROM CATECHISM GROUP: Father Simon said the Catechism Group was about half way through the programme. The children would be making their first confessions on Saturday 26th March and their first Holy Communion on the Feast of Corpus Christi, Sunday 19th June 2022. Debbie Kerry and Mary Robinson reported on the sessions they were conducting with a small group of children. At present there were only four children and they undertook one session of two hours once a month. They said they were looking to attract more children.

16/22 REPORT FROM PARISH SOCIAL COMMITTEE: Carole Kelly reported. She said that the fortnightly Thursday afternoon get togethers were going well. She indicated that a meeting of the Social Committee should be held in the none too distant future to plan further events. She thought the possibility of a parish meal could be planned and it was suggested that a vintage afternoon tea was also worth considering. It was pointed out that whilst the kitchen was well appointed it was not fully equipped as regards, especially, crockery such as dinner plates. In the end it was agreed that a meeting be called to form firm plans as soon as practicable.

17/22 STOWMARKET FOOD BANK: The Chairman gave a brief summary of the Food Bank's present position. In discussion with the Food Bank and Father Simon it had been agreed that Our Lady's Parish Centre be the location for a Wednesday Pop-up Shop. After discussion it was agreed that the shop be open from 10.30am till 12.30pm only. Goods for the shop, no charges to be raised, would be delivered around 9.30am on Wednesdays by Food Bank volunteers and advertising of the shop and its opening hours would also be undertaken by the Food Bank. It was thought that two volunteers from Our Lady's would be sufficient to man the shop each week. The shop will first open on Wednesday 23rd February and Jo said that she and Frank would do the first week. Volunteers would be needed thereafter and it should be possible to draw up a formal roster before too long.

18/22 ANY OTHER BUSINESS ADVISED AT ITEM 6:

- **MASS STEWARDING:** Jo Lea sought clarification as to the way ahead now that there was relaxation of some restrictions as COVID was apparently waning, as regards the level of stewarding at weekend Masses. It was pointed out that prior to the pandemic, the parish

had simply had welcomers at Masses. After discussion it was agreed that we revert to the appellation of "Welcomers" and that there be no supervision of the Communion procession. Frank agreed to carry on compiling the Welcomers rosters for the Stowmarket weekend Masses for the time being. The question was, however, raised of advising parishioners who wished to receive Holy Communion on the tongue, to wait until the main procession had finished. There was no appetite to have an announcement made before each Mass, but the best solution seemed to have a suitable, short, item in the weekly newsletter. Some discussion then ensued as to the format of the weekly newsletter. Allan Scott thought he could draw up a suitable template which would meet the needs of the parish and agreed to consider this and make proposals to Father Simon.

- **CAFOD MATTERS:** Allan Scott reminded the meeting that the Lenten Family Fast Day would be on Friday 11th March and Father Simon confirmed that the envelopes for the collection had arrived in the parish. This will be advised in the newsletter. There was also a proposal to have our Lenten Soup Lunch in the Upper Church Hall on Saturday 19th March. This too needed to be advertised in the newsletter. It was thought that the CAFOD+ group would coordinate the soup event and provide suitable advertising material. Father Simon suggested having Stations of the Cross at 12noon on Fridays during Lent and that that be followed by a soup lunch, but no final decision was come to.

19/22 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING. 26¹st OF THE PPC: It was agreed that the next meeting take place after the Parish AGM in order to address any matter that might arise from the AGM. The next meeting of the PPC will therefore take place on **Tuesday 26th April**, in the Upper Church Hall, starting at 7.15pm.

20/22 CLOSING PRAYER: Father Simon formally closed the meeting with a prayer.

There being no further business the meeting ended at 9.22pm

Signed Date