



## Parish Council Meeting MEETING MINUTES

March 2016

### Meeting Details

Meeting Name:	St Joseph's Parish Council
Chairman:	John Bates
Date:	Tuesday, 15 <sup>th</sup> March 2016
Time:	8:00pm
Location:	St Joseph's Priory

### Invitees/Attendees

Name	Role	Present
John Bates	Chairman Health & Safety and Safeguarding	Yes
Fr Michael Spain	Parish Priest	Yes
Fr Martin McDonald	Carmelite Community	Apologies
John Forte	Finance Committee	Yes
Christine Cornwell	Evangelisation Activity Group	Apologies
Ros Burton	Liturgy & Church Activity Group	Apologies
Stephen Forster	Outreach Activity Group	Apologies
Kasia Misiewicz	Pastoral Activity Group	Yes
Nan Jacobson	Social Activity Group	Yes
Paul Rayner	Youth Activity Group	Yes
Mike Carney	Mass Representatives	Yes
Joan Barham	Secretary	Yes

## Agenda Items

Item	Subject	Presenter
1.	Opening Remarks	John Bates
2.	Matters Arising from Meeting Minutes of 23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2015	John Bates
3.	Year of Mercy	Fr Michael Spain
4.	Church Refurbishment	John Bates
5.	Health, Safety & Safeguarding	John Bates
6.	Events Team Changes	Fr Michael Spain
7.	Cleaning Team Changes	Ros Burton
8.	Change to AGM Date	Joan Barham
9.	Review of Action Items	All
10.	Closing Remarks	John Bates

## Meeting Notes

### 1. Opening Remarks - John Bates

- The meeting began with a welcome from John Bates. Fr Michael then led everyone in prayer.

### 2. Matters Arising from Meeting Minutes of 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2015 - John Bates

There were no matters arising from the Meeting Minutes of 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2015.

### 3. Year of Mercy - Fr Michael Spain

- Our Jubilee Year of Mercy had a promising beginning when you think of how memorable the opening of the Holy Door was, with Brother Thaddeus' Ordination seamlessly fitting in.
- Maureen Connell and Sally Taylor have created a simple and helpful pilgrimage booklet. It is based on something that was done in Enfield which they have adapted for our parish. Bishop Peter was impressed with the booklet when he saw it. This "*Pilgrimage through the Holy Door*" takes only 20-30 minutes and can be done individually or as part of a group. Booklets are on the left hand table as you enter the church through the Holy Door. Parishioners and/or visitors can undertake the pilgrimage any time the church is open.
- The Confirmation Candidates have been on this pilgrimage as part of their preparation programme. They split into three groups and were very respectful as they visited different parts of the church and reflected on God's mercy.
- The RCIA Group has also journeyed through the Holy Door and took part in a pilgrimage led by Fr Martin. Everyone involved found it very good and worthwhile.
- We have some parish groups booked in for pilgrimages and/or retreats. Little Chalfont are doing something imaginative by encouraging their parishioners to walk, cycle or drive to us for their pilgrimage at the beginning of May. At the recent Pastoral Area Council, they encouraged both Chesham and Chesham Bois parishes to undertake a pilgrimage. Holy Family in Langley is coming for a retreat. For visiting group we are also offering the use of the First Committee Room for breaks and/or refreshments. Now that our car parking situation has improved, we plan to circulate what we can offer to those parishes south of the Diocese which our Holy Door serves.

- For our own parish, Fr Michael would like to take a trip to Northampton; he feels we should make the effort to go to events there. The opening of the Holy Door at the Cathedral had great impact and he would like us to go there on pilgrimage, taking perhaps 40-50 people by coach.
- Bishop Peter enjoyed the recent Lenten Penitential Service with Exposition and Benediction. Fr Ken from Little Chalfont also complimented Fr Michael on the service. There was a great buzz amongst the priests in the sacristy. At the Pastoral Area Council Meeting many commented on what a lovely experience it was and how wonderful it was to be in a full church.
- Although our "*Pilgrimage through the Holy Door*" has featured in the Newsletter, it was felt that we should promote it more by including in the announcements at Easter (when we often have more people attending services) and advertising on the website – Joan was asked to action both of these points.

#### **4. Church Refurbishment - John Bates**

- The church refurbishment works are not yet finished – we have a long snagging list which needs to be completed. As of 4pm today, the Project Manager has assured us that the scaffolding will be removed by Thursday, 17<sup>th</sup> March. The car park will be cleared and swept on Friday, 18<sup>th</sup> March. This means we will have our car parking facilities back which is good news for everybody.
- The outstanding repairs/fixes will not be done until after Easter. These could not be tackled whilst the scaffolding was still up and we didn't want any works going on in the church during Holy Week. The snagging list will be discussed and prioritised at the Project Meeting later this week.
- The Disabled Toilet in the side porch will be available for use again from this coming weekend.
- We have been assured by the Diocese that they, together with the local authority, will organise specialists to conduct a health and safety review of our premises as well as compliance with the equalities legislation with regard to church properties.
- We have had feedback from readers regarding the new sound system. The microphone at the lectern is in a fixed position and cannot be adjusted for different heights (the old one had a flexible goose-neck). Although the microphone should pick up sound from within a one metre radius, it doesn't seem to be amplifying the voices in a satisfactory manner. Providing training on the audio system is on the "to do" list, however we first need to reposition the speakers in the church as well as re-look at the type of microphone we have on the lectern. Fr Michael has already asked that three to four readers join himself and Fr Martin to use, read, listen and evaluate the sound system. He feels this is worth doing and that something good will emerge, enabling us to improve the situation.
- When we first moved back into the church, we told people about our new hearing loop system which included reference to special equipment which enhances the sound for those hard of hearing. It was asked whether there was any progress on this. The loop system is now permanently on in the church. This means that those with hearing aids should be able to use this facility at all times. We plan to produce an instruction leaflet for the new device that enhances the sound further, but the system needs to be settled first (ref paragraph above regarding sound). The SVP are aware of two regular attendees who have not found any problem with the new system. If anyone is experiencing difficulty with the loop then they should let the Priest or Mass Representative know.
- Following Updates Number 11 & 12 in the Newsletter, there have been a few queries regarding disabled parking on Priory side once the scaffolding is down. It was made clear that the main purpose of closing off Priory side was to stop school parents parking there and blocking access to the Priory. Whilst our disabled entrance to the church remains Priory side, people may park there for disabled access with the permission of either Fr Michael or Fr Martin. Fr Michael will talk to Jo Marsh regarding parking on Priory side and ask that she inform parents of the situation.

#### **5. Health, Safety & Safeguarding - John Bates**

- Refer to the "*Health & Safety and Safeguarding Report Mar16*" circulated before the meeting.
- See agenda item above regarding Health & Safety review of our properties.

## 6. Events Team Changes - Fr Michael Spain

- Christine Hopson and Margaret Corrigan have stepped down from the Events Team. During their 15 month tenure, they made a tremendous contribution to the parish, bringing people together from all walks of life and involving them in parish activities. Thanks to their efforts, our parish enjoyed a variety of well-organised and successful events whilst raising much needed funds. Their commitment and energy, combined with imaginative ideas, meant we enjoyed a very special social calendar throughout our Centenary year in 2015.
- The Parish Council thanked Christine and Margaret whole heartedly for the time and effort they dedicated to organising parish events, especially our Centenary Celebrations. We appreciate what their achievements have done for the parish. They will be sorely missed.

## 7. Cleaning Team Changes - Joan Barham (on behalf of Ros Burton)

- Anne Daniel has retired from organising the Cleaning Team after many years of service. The Parish Council expressed their sincere gratitude for all her hard work to ensure the Church was presented so beautifully each week for our Masses and Liturgies.
- No new leader has come forward from the existing team, which really needs more volunteers. Everyone who comes to Mass expects the church to be clean and tidy, however it takes time and effort to clean not only the church but also the Oratory, sacristy, mortuary chapel and choir loft.
- Fr Michael was very clear that we will not engage professional cleaners to do this job. In a parish of our size (1,200+ families with 3,000+ parishioners) we should be able to get sufficient volunteers to clean the church on a rota basis. He especially wants to encourage the younger generation to help in the church and make some contribution to the running their parish.
- Fr Michael will make an appeal from the altar about this. He has some thoughts about getting a men's cleaning team together, as well as parents of those enrolled in our confirmation and communion programmes. He is very happy to join a cleaning team himself. In the meantime we need to think who we could approach to lead the team.

## 8. Change to AGM Date - Joan Barham

- Proposal to move the Parish Annual General Meeting from Sunday, 25<sup>th</sup> September (agreed last meeting) back by one week. As part of the Year of Mercy, there is a Jubilee for Catechists on Sunday, 25<sup>th</sup> September and here in St Joseph's we will be hosting a retreat on that day and will need facilities to accommodate this event.
- This initiative came out of our Spirituality Group but it is being done under the banner of NORES which both Fr Michael and Mgr Kevin agreed to. We have input into the event and, as hosts, will be involved in setting up the day. NORES invited Bishop John Wilson, the newly ordained auxiliary Bishop of Westminster, to be a guest speaker and he has accepted.
- There is a meeting with with Alex Heath mid-April to discuss arrangements for the day. We envisage it running from 2pm to 5:30pm (or perhaps 5pm giving people opportunity to attend our evening Mass).
- The Council agreed to this proposal and a new Annual General Meeting date was set for Sunday, 2<sup>nd</sup> October at 3pm in the Parish Centre.

## 9. Review of Action Items - All

- **Action Items** – A new action list was created – see "*Parish Council Action Items (as at 15Mar16)*".
- **M002 & M022** re: *Youth SVP & Engaging 12-15 and 15-18 year olds* – Isabel Fawcett started work at the beginning of December. Since then she has got involved in many things and the Youth Ministry Team had a meeting with her last week. She has reviewed what we do and prepared a report with her observations, findings and recommendations; her view of what is wrong or needs to be addressed. Plan is to get together soon and prioritise what needs to be done.

- **M008** re: *Transport of Parishioners to Mass* – We have now lost two drivers as they didn't want to get involved in the DBS process.
- **M014** re: *DBS Checks and Forms* – Mary Forsyth has been appointed to help with processing and administration of DBS Forms. Currently there is a considerable delay as there is no one in post at the Diocese to do this. We are up to date from our point of view.

## 10. Closing Remarks - John Bates

- Some people feel that the reports submitted by activity groups should be included on the parish website alongside council meeting minutes. This was discussed briefly but no conclusion was reached. It was decided that we will review this again in a few months time.
- The meeting concluded with a prayer led by Fr Michael.
- Next meeting is Tuesday, 19<sup>th</sup> July at 8pm in the Priory.