



## Parish Council Meeting MEETING MINUTES

*November 2015*

### Meeting Details

Meeting Name:	St Joseph's Parish Council
Chairman:	John Bates
Date:	Monday, 23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2015
Time:	8:00pm
Location:	St Joseph's Priory

### Invitees/Attendees

<b>Name</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Present</b>
John Bates	Chairman Health & Safety and Safeguarding	Yes
Fr Michael Spain	Parish Priest	Yes
Fr Martin McDonald	Carmelite Community	Yes
John Forte	Finance Committee	Yes
Christine Cornwell	Evangelisation Activity Group	Yes
Ros Burton	Liturgy & Church Activity Group	Yes
Stephen Forster	Outreach Activity Group	Yes
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 1 <sup>st</sup> July 2015	John Bates
3.	Return to the Church	John Bates
4.	Jubilee Year of Mercy & The Holy Door	Fr Michael Spain
5.	Youth Ministry Coordinator Update	Paul Rayner
6.	Health, Safety & Safeguarding	John Bates
7.	Meeting Dates for 2016	All
8.	Review of Action Items	All
9.	Any Other Business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Advent &amp; Christmas Services (Joan Barham)</li> </ul>	John Bates
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 1<sup>st</sup> July 2015 - John Bates

There were no matters arising from the Meeting Minutes of 1<sup>st</sup> July 2015.

### 3. Return to the Church - John Bates

- A lot has been done in St Joseph's Church over last six months and long before that by many people in the parish. Many thanks to all of them for their hard work and suggestions, all of which have been considered.
- We are pleased to announce that the contractors see no reason why we will not be back in the church for the 5:30pm Mass next Saturday – the First Sunday of Advent (the deadline given at the outset of the works). They have done their part and you will see for yourselves what has been done and what is new when you enter the church.
- The **Loop System** has been improved with much better facilities available for those hard of hearing. The **Lighting** has been improved and can be adjusted so we can find the settings most suitable for those with difficulty in reading. The **Sanctuary Steps** eventually have a nosing on them so that people with poor sight or visibility can see more easily.
- With regards to a **Ramp** for wheelchairs, this will be considered by the Diocese when they do a survey of premises following completion of the refurbishment when the scaffolding has been removed. It did carry out a survey prior to work commencing and stated that our facilities were adequate – however, we are looking to make improvements. The Diocese will also assess the entrance/exit to Parish Centre and Hall and has suggested that we may/may not need planning permission for what we want to do there.
- This parish is concerned with the protection of children and those that are less able or vulnerable. It is our responsibility to ensure that we have a safe environment for everyone, which promotes and

supports their well being. Fr Michael has a particular interest in this and he has driven some of the things we have done thus far and seeks to improve things going forward.

- For our return to the church, there will be an insert with the Newsletter which will explain the ways to/from the church for those who are able, less able and in wheelchairs. John Bates has already explained to a couple with an electric wheelchair what they will do, as well as briefing Kasia on what needs to happen for their SVP clients. The contractors will cut excess scaffolding at the front of the Priory side of the church and bring the harris fencing back to allow enough space for a wheelchair to travel up the side of the church. There will be sufficient room for a car to stop at the entrance, allowing the wheelchair user to exit the car, come up along the side of the church in their wheelchair and enter the church via the side door in the lower sacristy. There will be a map for everyone else. Parishioners will have to walk around the footpath from the car park and enter the church via the main door. Instructions will be included to explain how people get out in the event of an emergency. The side door on to the car park will be an emergency exit only whilst construction continues. The Priest celebrating Mass will have the key to the fenced off area and can unlock the door so people can get out if needs be. The contractors will board up the scaffolding at the main door.
- We will get our electric certification so the building will be legal. As regards the roof, we have it on good authority that it would not have lasted another severe winter. The tiles and coping stones were in very poor condition and there was evidence in church of water getting in. We have done quite a lot of important and essential works.
- Suggested that we alert Mass Representatives so they can be available with their welcoming teams to guide people. Also, should there be anyone at Mass in a wheelchair without a carer, suggest they make themselves known to the Mass Representative so they can give assistance where/if required.
- The question – *who is responsible for what as regards what will be done about access once these works are done?* – was raised. The Diocese appoints an independent expert to come into the church to make an assessment and provide up-to-date technical advice. They can guide us as regards access for those less able, wheelchair users, those with difficulty walking, etc and may suggest solutions such as handrails, ramping, etc. At that point we can also consider what can be done at the side door onto the car park – the incline of exit to car park could infringe on car entry; may need to consider dog-leg ramp.
- There was a discussion about the Ministry of the Disabled – it was highlighted that the aspirations as currently set out on the website cannot be achieved. Suggested it would be helpful to have this group re-established and for that person to be represented on the Finance Committee or at least able to provide input to it. As far as the SVP are aware, none of their clients has ever felt that they could become actively involved in ministry such as a reader, altar server, etc – this is not because they were not reached out to, but because they simply did not feel well/strong enough to do so.
- It was argued that we should make our facilities as accessible as possible. In response it was stated that we do needs to be practical and reasonable and that applies to both the Disabilities Act and the Equalities Act. What we are doing is practical and reasonable and if we get a consultant from Diocese they will advise us. Every time someone less able or with poor/limited mobility has been drawn to the attention of the SVP (currently incorporating Ministry of the Disabled) they have been given support immediately and have been very pleased with the help that they get. The new sound and lighting within the church should also improve things for people.
- The discussion continued in the vein that what we have is adequate but not what we aspire to. It highlighted that we really think about how we communicate what our plans are. Joan was instructed to adjust the wording on the website for the Ministry of the Disabled. In terms of the Parish Centre and Hall, when they come to do the church we will take the opportunity for them to look at that building as well.

#### **4. Jubilee Year of Mercy & The Holy Door - Fr Michael Spain**

- At the 11am Mass on Sunday, 13<sup>th</sup> December, Bishop Peter will open the Holy Door which is in the latter stages of construction. The opening of the Holy Door is connected with indulgences and there are designated times the door has to be open so people can come to visit. There will also be times a priest has to be available to administer the Sacrament of Reconciliation. We will hear more about the Holy Door and the Jubilee Year of Mercy in Bishop Peter's Homily.

- At the same Mass, Bishop Peter will ordain a Carmelite Deacon.

## 5. Youth Ministry Coordinator Update - Paul Rayner

- Throughout the summer we have been through the process of interviewing for the Youth Co-ordinator Role. Isabel Fawcett will be joining the team at the beginning of December and will be employed on a 12 month contract.
- We are excited and looking forward to Isabel starting work with us. She is well formed, having a degree in Theology as well as being involved in the Catholic Union and being President of the Life Group.
- She has recently completed an Evangelising Course at the Emmanuel School of Mission in Rome and has done two missions for older children and young adults in Poland and the USA.
- Fr Michael/Paul to prepare something for Newsletter to introduce Isabel to the parish.
- The Youth Management Team has changed its name to the Youth Ministry Group. It has done well over the last few years but recognises there is a gap for the 15-18 year olds – we need to figure out how we engage them. Paul was challenged about this and asked what was happening for the 12-15 year olds in the parish. Looking through our list of centenary events, very few were for teenagers and the three year Confirmation process whereby young people are engaged in Year 7 has gone by the wayside. Other than preparing those in Year 9 for Confirmation, what are we doing? Paul agreed to take this back to the Youth Ministry Group.
- Both Fr Michael and Fr Martin are involved with the youth and they are leading this year's Confirmation preparation sessions, supported by the Youth Ministry Group. We had the Mass of Enrolment last Sunday (National Youth Sunday) which went really well.
- It was pointed out that establishing a Youth SVP (an outstanding Parish Council action for some time) could be a way to engage the youth whilst also meeting a need for people who need/would benefit from visiting.

## 6. Health, Safety & Safeguarding - John Bates

- Refer to the "*Health & Safety and Safeguarding Report Nov15*" circulated before the meeting.

## 7. Meeting Dates for 2016 - All

- The Council agreed that it would meet three times in 2016 (March, July and November) in addition to the AGM. Fr Michael to sort out dates with Joan and then let people know.
- *Subsequent to the meeting, the following dates were decided:*
  - *Tuesday, 15<sup>th</sup> March 2016*
  - *Tuesday, 19<sup>th</sup> July 2016*
  - *Tuesday, 15<sup>th</sup> November 2016*
- All meetings will take place in the Priory and will start at 8pm.
- The 2016 AGM was set for Sunday, 25<sup>th</sup> September, in line with our policy to have it at the end of September/beginning of October. It will be held in the Parish Centre from 3pm to 5pm.

## 8. Review of Action Items - All

- **Action Items** – A new action list was created – see "*Parish Council Action Items (as at 23Nov15)*".
- The Action Items were not reviewed at this meeting; new items were added to the existing list.

## 9. Any Other Business - John Bates

- In future we won't have "Any Other Business" as a standing agenda item. People will need to request specific discussion topics in advance and they will be put on the agenda with any corresponding papers circulated ahead of the meeting.

Refer to the following reports received for information about each Activity Group:

- "Evangelisation Report Nov15"
- "Outreach Report Nov15"
- "Liturgy & Church Report Nov15"
- "Pastoral Report Nov15"
- "Youth Report Nov15"
- "Finance Report Nov15"

No report was received from the Social Activity Group.

- **Joan Barham: Advent & Christmas Services** – A list of services and events taking place during Advent was distributed, along with the Christmas and New Year Mass times. Those present were shown the proof Christmas card with Mass times which will be distributed mid-December with the Newsletter and via the School. This information will also be emailed out to everyone the week before Christmas as well as posted on the notice boards and website.
- Planning for the busy 5pm Family Christmas Eve Mass is underway. Thanks to the refurbishment works, we can relay the Mass from the Church to the Parish Centre/Hall. David Bentley will organise the car parking, the majority of which will have to be at the school. There will also be stewards inside the church. Like last year, communion for this Mass will be under one kind and extra Eucharistic Ministers will be asked to service the Choir Loft and Parish Centre/Hall.
- **Mike Carney** – Highlighted that we have had a lot of second collections recently, do we have too many? It was explained that there are different types of second collection – Mandatory, Optional and Parish. On certain weekends the Bishops of England and Wales mandate that we take second collections for specific purposes. We have no choice about whether we do this or not; we are expected to have these collections the same as every other parish in the country. There are also optional second collections, as per the Bishops of England and Wales guidance; here in St Joseph's we generally don't do these. We also have some parish second collections for projects, groups or societies that we support (for example, London & Slough Run/SHOC on Homelessness Sunday, SVP on the Sunday nearest to feast of St Vincent de Paul, Cameroon Education Fund, etc). We do try to keep the number of second collections to a minimum.
- **Paul Rayner** – Enquired if we were planning to make an appeal to bridge the 7% deficit in our finances. We probably need to plan a campaign to increase our weekly offerings as currently some very generous donors in the parish are keeping us afloat. John Forte said we are thankful for the Events Team which contributes an average of £25K per year towards the parish which helps us cover the 7%. He also said we are very grateful to the Furniture Market which contributes £13-15K per year, without them we would struggle. In principle, the parish should be able to operate from its collection and that should cover its running costs.
- The Council thanked John Forte for his hard work in making sure that we get the Church works and improvements done within our resources and budget.
- Stephen Forster (on behalf of Sally Taylor) thanked all those who helped raise money for the LIFE Group at their recent social event.

## 10. Closing Remarks - John Bates

- The meeting concluded with a prayer led by Fr Martin.
- Next meeting is Tuesday, 15<sup>th</sup> March at 8pm in the Priory.