



**Minutes of Meeting held at
Our Lady's Church on Tuesday 9th May 2017**

1.0 Welcome and Opening Prayer

1.1 Grant welcomed everyone to the meeting and Fr Andy led the opening prayer.

2.0 Attendance and Apologies

2.1 Present: Grant Kudsee (Chairing), Fr Andy, Fr Alessandro, Dcn John, Peter Kirk, Richard Kolka, Lewis Canning, Mike Robinson, Brian Shelley and Joan Barham.

2.2 Apologies for absence were received from: Fr Michael Spain, Fr Ken Payne and Charles Whitehead.

3.0 Agenda

3.1 The draft agenda was accepted.

4.0 Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising

4.1 The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 7th March 2017 were approved as an accurate record.

4.2 There were no matters arising.

5.0 PAC Secretary

4.1 Stephen Forster has stood down as Secretary to the Pastoral Area Council. He has done a wonderful job fulfilling this role, especially acting as a single point of contact to share and/or consolidate information across the parishes. The PAC is grateful for his work in preparing for and following up after each meeting which was always timely and thorough. Everyone present expressed their thanks to Stephen for his contribution to the PAC.

4.2 Each parish to consider if they have someone who might replace Stephen as secretary, either from within existing PAC members or from elsewhere in their parish. If no one is forthcoming, it was agreed that we will return to the rotation basis used previously, with each parish taking it in turns to liaise with the chairman to prepare the agenda and record/circulate the minutes of meetings.

6.0 **School House at Our Lady's**

6.1 This matter is progressing. The school house is owned by the nuns but rented by the diocese. It is in dire need of refurbishment but no one – nuns, diocese or school – want to fund the work. Our Lady's Parish is currently funding the insurance. It was agreed this matter be put on the agenda for the next PAC Meeting in July and that hopefully Deacon David Curtis can attend.

6.2 The caretaker's house at St Joseph's is owned by the school and is now vacant as the caretaker has retired and the new one isn't in need of accommodation. The school is considering what to do, with one idea being offering rooms for rent to newly qualified teachers working in the area.

7.0 **Compass Youth Club**

7.1 *See attached report "COMPASS Advisory Group Mtg Notes 04Apr17".*

7.2 The survey of parents is currently underway. The Advisory Group is awaiting feedback before evaluating this initiative to see if it is viable. The key issue is the lack of leaders.

7.3 A request has been put to Fr Michael about whether Isabel, the youth worker at St Joseph's, might be able to support this project in some way – presently awaiting response.

7.4 It has been suggested that the Advisory Group apply to the Holy Cross Trust for funds. This would entail submitting a proposal in August in the hope of making a presentation to the Trustees in October. Steve Gill works for NOAH, a homeless project in Luton. He advises seeking professional help when making an application to a trust such as this and can help with suitable contacts.

7.5 Everyone agreed that it would be a great shame if COMPASS doesn't continue. If it is not viable, then it was suggested that perhaps a social event could be organised for young people 3 or 4 times a year (for example, Youth BBQ). Our Lady's School is still supportive as a venue. Brian is keeping the wheels in motion and staying on top of this.

8. Updates from Previous Meetings

8.1 *Bishop Peter's Proposal to Amalgamate Pastoral Areas*

Following our previous meeting a letter was prepared and sent to Bishop Peter expressing our thoughts on this matter. No feedback or decision from the bishop as yet, will check with Fr Michael when he returns from the Carmelite Chapter and keep an eye on the AD CLERUM.

8.2 *Confirmation Candidate's Programme*

We've almost come to the end of the Confirmation course! St Joseph's still meet on Fridays and St Aidan's, St Columba's and Our Lady's are also still meeting on Saturday afternoons.

Since the retreat held at the beginning we have not officially come together as pastoral area. There were plans to meet at FLAME or BLAZE but in the end one group went to each. We have had a bit of a crossover with some confirmandi who can't make Fridays going to Saturday sessions and vice versa.

St Joseph's went to FLAME in the SSE Wembley Arena on 11th March and this was a great day with inspiring worship led by Matt Redman and speakers such as Cardinal Tagle from Myanmar and speakers from CAFOD. In general the confirmandi enjoyed seeing so many other young people – about 10,000 other young Catholics were there – as well as the worship. They said that most of the speakers were interesting but we all agreed that some of them went on slightly too long. Still the feedback was generally positive and seeing that many other young people definitely left an impression.

St Aidan's, St Columba's and Our Lady's went to the BLAZE retreat run by the diocese held at Restore Hope Latimer. There was opportunity for confession, various workshops, teaching from the Chaplain of St Joan of Arc, Rickmansworth and Q&A with the Bishop followed by Mass. Having the retreat held closer to us rather than closer to Northampton, as it was last year, definitely made a difference.

On 21st May Bishop Peter will come to St Joseph's to celebrate two masses. The first will be at 2pm and will be for the 35 candidates from St Joseph's. The second will be at 5pm for the 46 candidates from St Aidan's, St Columba's and Our Lady's.

Since the Bishop has asked us to work together the hope was that we would have a choir which reflected that. Anne Nolan and Richard Kolka from St Columba's very kindly stepped up to the mark and took the lead in organising it after being asked by the clergy and we will have singers from St Columba's and some from St Joseph's. Sadly we don't quite have people from all four churches nor do we have as many as we might have hoped from St Joseph's. This is down to various reasons which can't always be helped and I'm sure it will be wonderful on the day, but since this is something that will continue into the future I hope that next year the group can be even more an image of a united Pastoral Area.

Rather than having a reception on the day for the confirmandi, the certificates will be given out in the respective parishes so that the parishes have another chance to welcome their own

confirmandi. St Joseph's will be inviting their confirmandi to the 5:30pm Mass on 11th June with a small reception afterwards.

As Catechists we will be meeting up after the Confirmation to discuss how we felt the course went, how the book "*Transformed in Christ*" was and how we can work more closely to Bishop Peter's wishes.

8.3 *Corpus Christi Procession*

The clergy have not had the opportunity to discuss or progress this thus far. Given the proximity of the feast of Corpus Christi, it was suggested that St Aidan's takes the lead as they have an established format for this. Deacon John to talk to Fr Ken and, if acceptable, invite people from all four parishes (via newsletters and announcements) to participate in the Corpus Christi Procession which will take place at 11:45am (after the 11am Mass) in St Aidan's on Sunday, 18th June. Those children who have made their First Holy Communion this year are invited to attend in their Communion outfits.

It was noted at this point that the action for the clergy to look at Holy Day Mass times, so that where possible clashes can be avoided, was still outstanding.

8.4 *Co-Ordinator for Marriage Preparation*

We are still seeking a replacement for Deacon John to co-ordinate marriage preparation.

8.5 *CAFOD Affairs*

CAFOD is holding a retreat on Saturday, 10th June at Holy Family, Slough with "*Laudato Si*" as the theme from 10am to 3:30pm.

St Aidan's CAFOD group is to broaden into a Justice and Peace group.

St Aidan's to host CAFOD Supporters Day for the southern half of the Diocese on Saturday, 23rd September.

9.0 **Parish and School News, Developments & Forthcoming Events**

Our Lady's

- 1) Parish activities continue as normal.
- 2) Fr Andy said Mass at Our Lady's School for the start of term on Easter Friday.
- 3) There was a May Procession with the crowning of Mary at the beginning of May.

St Aidan's

- 1) As part of Chess Valley Churches Together, St. Aidan's:
 - Took part in a Lent course based on 'The King's Speech';
 - Took a leading role in a Lent & Easter Service at the Chalfont Epilepsy Centre on 5th April;

- Has seen the exit of the Baptist and Methodist ministers to pastures new and the retirement of the Anglican Rector of Chenies on Easter Sunday.
 - Led the Good Friday Walk of Witness through Little Chalfont with 8 stops for a Station of the Cross; Taize chants in between, and Stations 9-15 completed in St Aidan's church. Concluded with hot-cross buns in the Hall.
- 2) Lent saw:
- The conclusion of St. Aidan's participation in 'The Big Picture' 12-week Bible study course at St. Joseph's;
 - Stations of the Cross every Friday morning after the 9.30am Mass (well attended) and again on Sundays at 6pm (very few attended);
 - The Cathedral Centre Appeal made as agreed on 2nd Sunday (12th March);
 - Reconciliation Day on 8 April with modest numbers.
- 3) Holy Week services were well attended. The parish was represented at the Chrism Mass at the Cathedral. The Polish Community joined in the Easter Vigil. There was a packed church for the Easter Sunday morning Mass.
- 4) Preparations continued for First Holy Communions on Saturday 20th May and Confirmations on Sunday 21st May (the latter at St. Joseph's).
- 5) A very successful May Fayre was held on Monday 1st May and in spite of the inclement weather £7,300 was raised and will be divided equally between The Chiltern Child Contact Centre, The Hospice of St. Francis and the parish.
- 6) The latest Baptism Preparation Course for 5 families has been held after Sunday Mass on 30th Apr & 7th May and concludes on 14th May.
- 7) Marriage preparation for 5 couples from St Aidan's is being provided by mentors in the Pastoral Area Group.

St Columba's

- 1) St Columba's Pastoral Work continue: the Support Group keep to put in action the suggestions received during the Parish Assembly on January according with the first point of the reflection "*Sense of Community Life*";
- Increasing the spiritual life (common moment of prayer like Rosary and the Liturgy of the Hours);
 - Reflection and preparation: Course of Preparation for Ministry of the Holy Communion every Thursday 16th March to 6th April by NORES;
 - Emphasising Visit to the sick.
- 2) Lent :
- Wednesdays of Reflection through the catechesis Fr Benedetto D'Autilia, Evening's Movie;

- Stations of the Cross every Friday evening after the 7pm Mass (well attended) with the participation of the Bishop Peter;
 - The Cathedral Centre Appeal made with a not very good success;
 - Reconciliation Service on 5th April with the presence of Fr Michael Spain and Fr Andy Ollard: very good participation.
- 3) Holy Week services were well attended including a good number of the parishioners taking part of the Chrism Mass in the Cathedral. The Community joined with a very good participation to the celebration of Maundy Thursday where the new Ministers of Holy Communion were commissioned. There was a big number especially for the Easter Sunday morning Mass.
 - 4) Italian Mass first Sunday of each month at 11:30 am is increasing starting with 30 peoples some weeks we reached the number of 80.
 - 5) Social Committee is putting in action new activities: liturgical solemn celebration for St Columba's Day on 9th June at 7pm and the 11th June a Parish Fair after Morning Mass 9am
 - 6) Preparations continued for First Holy Communions on Saturday 17th June and Confirmation on Sunday 21st May (the latter at St Joseph's).
 - 7) Readers Preparation Course will start the 6th June of 2017 led by NORES for three consecutive Tuesday at 7.30pm in the Hall (Fr Kevin McGinnell proposes to invite the other parishes of the Area to join).

St Joseph's

- 1) The Carmelite Provincial Chapter is currently taking place in Ireland. Both Fr Michael and Fr Martin are attending this meeting which takes place every three years.
- 2) We hosted Fr Mark and the Northampton Cathedral Campaign on 12 March. He spoke at all Masses that Sunday and gave a presentation outlining the vision for the new centre.
- 3) Lent saw the parish host a Christian photography exhibition "Light from the Darkness" for two weeks in St Joseph's Church. For our Lenten celebration of reconciliation we had a day of Eucharistic Adoration with the opportunity for Confession. These "12 Hours For The Lord" started with Mass and finished with Benediction. Fr Martin created a Lenten/Easter Garden which provided an alternative space for prayer and reflection. We ran a children's Easter Craft & Games Day the first week of the school holidays which proved very popular.
- 4) Holy Week and Easter services were well attended. Two adults were Baptised and, together with one other, were Confirmed and made their First Communion at the Easter Vigil.
- 5) The Baptism preparation class for May began last Sunday (three week course).

- 6) First Holy Communion for parish children not attending catholic school took place on 30 April where 29 children received the Eucharist for the first time. First Communion for children from St Joseph's School takes place on Saturdays 10 and 17 June.
- 7) The Confirmation preparation programme is nearing completion with Confirmation for the Pastoral Area taking place on Sunday 21 May at 2pm and 5pm in St Joseph's Church. There will be a parish celebration for those confirmed and their families on Sunday, 11 June.
- 8) Marriage Preparation for engaged couples to be married in St Joseph's this year is well underway.
- 9) The Big Picture bible course concluded last week with a final feedback session.
- 10) We will host an evening to celebrate the 50th Jubilee of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal on Thursday, 25 May. There will be a shared supper, followed by Adoration with music, concluding with a talk – "50 Year of Amazing Grace" – by Charles Whitehead.
- 11) Parish Day, our annual church fete and one of our biggest fundraisers, takes place on Saturday, 8 July in the Priory grounds.
- 12) We are currently having a Parish Consultation about proposed improvements to St Joseph's Cemetery. It is full and the grounds, several gravestones and the mausoleum need attention. We would like to upgrade the entrance and build a memorial wall which would provide space for commemorative plaques and could be constructed so as to accommodate vaults for the interment of ashes.

Our Lady's School

- 1) See Agenda Item 6 above.

St Joseph's School

- 1) A new head teacher has been appointed and she will take up her position in September.
- 2) A question was raised about the cost of running the Governing Body and who funds it, the response being that this is funded by the school budget.

10.0 Any Other Business

- 10.1 The Easter Card with details of Holy Week and Easter services across the Pastoral Area was well received. It was recommended that next year we make it available earlier. The print cost is being shared by the four parishes, with each one contributing relative to the number of cards received. The cost of the cards distributed to families at Our Lady's School to be borne equally by the three parishes, with St Joseph's picking up the bill for its parish school.

10.2 It was suggested that we create a list of deferred agenda items, open action items and “watch” items (such as sending out the Easter Card earlier). This is something to be addressed when a new secretary is appointed.

10.3 This was Deacon John’s last meeting as he retires in June. He was thanked for all his hard work and effort over many years, having been a member of the PAC since its inception and at one time undertaking the role of Chairman. It has been a pleasure working with him and he will be sorely missed. The PAC thanked him and wished him well in his retirement.

11.0 Close & Prayer

11.1 Deacon John led the closing prayer. The meeting ended at 9.45pm

NB The next meeting will be on Tuesday 11th July at St Joseph’s.