

## To be agreed by CPC Committee at December 2020 Meeting

### Birtley St Joseph's Church Pastoral Council Meeting

#### Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2020

##### Present

Mick Davison,	MD	Peter Lavery (Deacon),	PL
Fr Mark Millward (Parish Priest),	FrMM	Peter Monaghan (Minutes),	PM
Tom Quigley (Chair)	TQ	Margaret Taylor,	MT
Sophie Taylor,	ST	Catherine Tumelty,	CT
Fr Martin Wheaton	FrMW		

##### Apologies

Doreen Cantwell,	DC	Hilda Fraser,	HF
Margaret Stafford,	MS		

TQ opened the meeting with tribute to Gordon Allan a well known parishioner who had sadly died that morning.

As it is the Feast of the Immaculate Conception on Tuesday December 8th PM opened the meeting with a prayer for Our lady.

##### Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the last CPC meeting on November 8th 2020 were agreed.

##### Matters arising from the Minutes of Previous Meeting

**ST to coordinate the setting up of subgroup to explore the possibility of setting up a listening group.**

ST said that she had been unable to take any action to start the setting up of a sub group. MD said that the lady who started the listening groups at the cathedral and Morpeth gave a presentation to Partnership Chairs Meeting. She is now going to issue guidelines for setting up listening services across the diocese. MD suggested that any listening service should be set up at partnership level rather than parish level and said that when the guidelines were available he would circulate them to the CPC and PDG.

##### **Correspondence re removal of Sunday Mass at St Joseph's**

FrMm said that he was waiting to have a face to face meeting with interested parties and the clergy but it would probably have to wait until the New Year. He asked if Adrian Flynn (the organist) and the men's choir had also been involved with the music as well as the Sunday morning choir. MD said that Frank McMahon had consulted the men's choir on the matter and they wished to decide on the matter when they had the opportunity to meet in a large group. FrMM said that it was important to discuss how the music was to be shared out when there was only one parish Mass.

##### **Middle Lodge**

FrMM said that he had been invited to the Diocesan Finance Committee Meeting to make the case for the demolition of Middle Lodge. He said that Andrew Gillingham had made all the relevant documents and information available and this had been very important in making the case for demolition. He said that the Diocesan Finance Committee would be making

a recommendation to the Trustees at a meeting on Thursday and we would find out the result then. MD said that he had been speaking to the local councillors and they had no objections to demolition and neither did the Gateshead Council planning committee. FrMM said that Minnie Fraser from the diocese had also been in touch with Gateshead Council over the matter.

### **Correspondence - The Belgian Cemetery**

TQ had received a letter from Michelle Irwin about the untidy state of the Belgian Cemetery. Michelle (the Chair of Governors of the Joint Federation of St Joseph's Schools) said that she had been informed that the cemetery seemed to be neglected and had contacted Councillor Sheila Gallagher (a parishioner) who had organised an urgent tidy up. MD said that the cemetery was known locally as the "Belgian Cemetery" but is actually a Catholic cemetery, Father Duffy had looked after it and then Gateshead Council had taken over responsibility but had withdrawn due to lack of money. He said that in 2016 a voluntary agreement was made with the air cadets to maintain the cemetery but he was guessing that recently they had been unable to look after it due to Covid-19 restrictions. FrMM said that the cemetery at the church at Our Blessed Lady Immaculate (OBLI) Washington was looked after by private contractors and was paid for by the church. PL said that if private contractors were asked to maintain it then it was possible that the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (Tom Hall) may contribute as there were war graves there. It was agreed that responsibility for the cemetery needed to be allotted and that the first step would be to contact the air cadets and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

#### **Action Point:**

**TQ to contact air cadets and Commonwealth War Graves Commission and report back.**

### **Post Lockdown Arrangements - Worship, Prayer, Sacraments**

#### **Advent and Christmas**

PL said that following the November CPC Meeting a small group had been formed to plan Advent and Christmas. The group had developed some good ideas and responsibility for bring them to fruition had been shared. Details of Advent and Christmas activities had been put in the Bulletin, the parish website and the school websites while ST had also put details on to the parish Facebook. FrMM asked if all activities were to Government guidelines such as no external singing and was told that external singing would only be allowed in the 5 days for Christmas set out by the Government. PL said that the plans for Christmas were only made possible by the number of people volunteering as stewards and said that there had been great enthusiasm.

#### **Sacraments**

TQ asked about Sacraments and was told that the diocese had created and posted online sources for Holy Communion by parents. PL said that 23 children had now made their first Holy Communion and that a similar number still had to make their first Holy Communion. He praised FrMW who had put on extra Masses for children to make their first Holy Communion.

TQ asked that the CPC record its' thanks to all the steward volunteers for their work at extra Masses and for volunteering over Advent and Christmas.

### **Carol Service**

MD said that he had been asked whether the parish could provide a Carol Service inside or outside the church with a small group singing. FrMM suggested that MD put together a proposal and pass it to the Diocesan Covid Management Committee for them to check whether it would be possible. He said the danger was that the carols were generally well known and that people might join in. PL said that the schools were recording carol services for parents but that was slightly different. FrMW said that there would be no harm in running the proposal for a carol service past the diocese. FrMM said that the church at Our Lady Queen of Peace, Penshaw (OLQP) was opening half an hour before Christmas Masses to play carols.

### **Christmas Masses**

PL said that FrMW was offering to celebrate as many Masses as was possible over Christmas. He said that Christmas Masses had been booked very quickly and asked if there was a chance to consolidate spaces by getting families in rows and thus freeing up space elsewhere in the church. He said that if we could maximise spaces using groups with the same surname or family groups with different surnames in the same bubble then the stewards could be made aware of this. FrMM said that this was the reason the Christmas masses were advertised so early so Audrey could pass the names out early. MD asked if it would be possible for people to be able to attend Masses every day during the octave of Christmas and FrMM said that the priests would look at that. CT asked if the Vigil Mass on Christmas Eve would be streamed and FrMM said that the Masses at OLQP and St John Boste (SJB) would be on the church services platform. ST said that she was going to try to stream as many Masses as possible on the Parish Facebook site. MD asked whether it would be worth putting a speaker outside the church on Christmas morning as it was possible that a lot of people would turn up who hadn't booked and FrMM thought that it may be a good idea to do that. FrMM thought that it also might be a good idea to buy some Prayer Trust Christmas prayer books for stewards to give to people to take away as that might make the stewards' jobs easier on the day. TQ asked who would order the books and FrMM said that he would be able to arrange for an order to be put in for all 5 churches.

### **Jesse Tree and Outdoor Crib**

MD said that the internal Jesse Tree was now in the Church but one had also been bought to put outside the church and the lights on that would be switched on after Holy Hour on Sunday 13th December at approximately 4pm. He said that the blessing of the crib would take place following Holy Hour on the last Sunday of Advent (December 20th) also at approximately 4pm. PL said that the Jesse symbols had been purchased for the tree in the grounds. FrMM said that he had been impressed by the energy and enthusiasm put in by the members of the parish and the churches in Washington were now following the example set by St Joseph's. TQ on behalf of the CPC thanked all who had contributed to the Advent and Christmas celebrations.

### **Reconciliation**

FrMM said that a day in each church would be set aside for Reconciliation over the Christmas period. CT said that she had been following the evening reflections and wondered if one Tuesday evening could be set aside for a reflection on Reconciliation. FrMM said that he would organise that.

### **St Joseph's Schools Joint Federation - Update**

TQ said that at a recent Governors Meeting he had spoken to the acting head teacher at St Joseph's Junior School and she had told him that she had been worried that the recruitment

timing for the new Executive Head Teacher, would coincide with the beginning of the 4th tranche of academisation. TQ and the acting head had thought that it may be better to delay academisation until the Fifth Tranche to allow the new head to become involved. FrMM said that the Fifth Tranche of Academisation had now been put back to 1st November 2021 which should give ample time to have the new executive head in place to allow them to take part in the process of academisation. He said that the Trust wishes to go at the pace of the school so if the governing body checks this with Nick Hearn then they should get a favourable response. TQ said that he would pass his comments to the board of governors.

MD commented that to bid for any potential future capital funding opportunities for new school building that the government might announce (post pandemic), it would be better if we could begin the process of academisation as soon as possible. Funding would probably be dependent on schools being independent from local council education authorities.

### **Benedict Partnership - Update**

MD said that there had been no PDG meeting in recent weeks.

### **Prayers for Next Meeting:**

CT offered to provide the prayers for the next meeting.

### **Any Other Business:**

#### **Pass Minutes of CPC Meeting to Schools**

TQ said that he had been asked if it would be possible to pass a copy of the minutes of the CPC Meetings to the schools. MD said that the minutes were put on the parish website but there seemed no reason why a copy should not be passed to the schools. There was a general discussion on broadening the membership of the CPC to include a representative from the schools and PL said that it would be very useful. MD said that one worry was that it would be an additional burden on staff who were already very busy but the question may be worth asking.

### **Next meeting:**

It was decided that the next meeting should be on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2021 at 7pm

PM closed the meeting with a "Hail Mary" for all the sick and recently deceased of the parish and a short prayer from the Mass of the Feast Day of the Immaculate Conception.