

To be agreed by CPC Committee at 12th May meeting

Birtley St. Joseph's Church Pastoral Council Meeting

Sunday 14th April 2024

Present

Bernadette Bartlett,	BB	Mick Davison	MD
Hilda Fraser	HF	Peter Lavery (Deacon)	PL
Peter Monaghan (Minutes)	PM	Pauline Pestell	PP
Tom Quigley (Chair)	TQ	Catherine Tumelty	CT
Fr Martin Wheaton	FrMW		

Fr Martin Wheaton (FrMW) was absent at the start of the meeting but joined later.

Apologies

Hannah Bartlett	HB	Doreen Cantwell,	DC
Michelle Irwin	MI	Darren Kelsey	DK
Margaret Taylor	MT		

CT opened the meeting with a prayer.

TQ welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The minutes of the meeting from 10th March 2024 were discussed.

Holy Saturday Easter Vigil

There had been an open fire at the Easter Vigil Mass and HF asked if the parish was covered in case anything went wrong. MD said that the parish was insured for fire and said that fire extinguishers were placed next to the sanctuary.

Reconciliation

MD said that he had contacted the partnership newsletter about putting a set Reconciliation time on for St Joseph's but the requested information had not yet been put on.

The minutes of the meeting from 10th March 2024 were then agreed.

Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting on 10th March 2024.

There were no Matters Arising.

Confirmations 2025

PL said that MT had requested that the subject be raised and wished to get on the front foot. MD said that the parish was due to have confirmations in 2024 and that St Joseph's would be joining in the confirmation process with St Cuthbert's and St Bede's Sacriston planned for the Autumn. PL said that he was hoping for younger catechists to come in to lead the process as that required people young enough for the children to react to. He said that a line of communication was needed with the secondary schools and that there were good communications with the chaplain at

Cardinal Hume but St Leonard's currently didn't have a chaplain. MD said that he would raise the issue of confirmations at the PDG Meeting due to be held in the current week.

Update on Sacraments & First Holy Communion Group Celebrations

Sacraments

PL said that the Sacraments were at the heart of the parish and that there were a healthy number of baptisms taking place. He said the last RCIA candidate had been received into the Church on Saturday 13th April. He said that there were currently very few marriages planned and that only 3 had been booked for the coming year. MD said that marriages across the country were down 35% and this mirrored the current situation with the church. PL said that many couples were marrying outside the church but that couples were very welcome to come to church to have their marriages blessed.

First Holy Communions

PL said that First Holy Communions were due to take place either side of the half term holiday. He said that the First Holy Communions for St Joseph's were due to take place during the visit of Bishop Stephen to the Partnership over the weekend of May 17-19th while the First Holy Communions for St Benet's would take place a few weeks later. He said that there had been a collection for First Holy Communion breakfasts at Mass the previous night and the congregation had been very generous.

Sacrament for the Sick

PL said that a lot of people had taken the Sacrament for the Sick recently and he said that it would also be distributed at the forthcoming SVP mass for the Housebound on 22nd June.

Social Justice and Environmental Group - Update

Update

TQ gave a report on behalf of Kevin Haigh from the Social Justice and Environmental Group.

"The Social Justice and Environmental Group are planning a sort of Rehoming event where folks can come and obtain Kitchenware, Hardware and toys. The plant exchange would be before this so anything left over could be available at the Rehoming. The SJE team are thinking about June time with one event at Our Ladies in the Village and one at St. Joseph's.

I will approach the Parish Centre to see if it would be available for such a Saturday event.

I would encourage the Pastoral Council to look for people to support Rachel Prior as she is the only other St, Joseph's member in the Team. "

Kevin said that he wouldn't be able to take part in the event as his wife Kathleen currently needs a lot of support and he was due to have shoulder surgery which could happen in the next two months.

The Pastoral Council sent their good wishes to Kevin and his wife Kathleen.

Visit by Bishop Stephen - Saturday 18th May

PL said that plans were being made for the visit of Bishop Stephen to the parishes of St John XXIII and St Joseph over the weekend of May 17-19th and would be saying the Vigil Mass at St Joseph's for the Feast of Pentecost. He said that additional people may come to see the Bishop but he said

that no special arrangements (e.g. repainting) would be done and the Bishop would see the parish as it was. MD said that the Mens' Choir and the folk group would be combining together for the Mass and that a special Liturgy would be arranged.

MD said that the Parish Centre was available after Mass and that it was hoped that the Bishop would attend after Mass and have a cup of tea. PL said that he thought that the Bishop would take an interest in what the people in the parish do.

St Joseph's , Elisabethville Cemetery (Belgian Cemetery)

TQ said that a lorry carrying concrete had recently crashed through the railings at the Belgian Cemetery but photos had been taken and the lorry identified. He said that repairs would be done under insurance as there was proof. There had even been a report on the incident in the Evening Chronicle. He said that local councillors and the Birtley Heritage Group had been involved as had Andrew Gillingham from the diocese.

Pastoral Care of our Schools - Update

St Joseph's & St Benet's

PL said that there had recently been a change in Pastoral Care for the schools. FRMW would be organising a series of School Masses at both schools while PL would take the pastoral lead at St Joseph's and Benet's.

FRMW joined the meeting at this point. He confirmed that Bishop Stephen would be visiting the Parish Centre after 5pm Mass on Saturday May 18th.

St Benet's Update

BB said that there had been good feedback on recent services at the school and the "CAFOD Walk" had been very successful. She said the most recent service at the school had made the biggest impact.

St Leonard's & Cardinal Hume

PL said that he was not sure of the situation at St Leonard's but he said that most of the Year 6 children from St Benet's would now be going to Cardinal Hume along with the Year 6 children from St Joseph's which meant that it would be easier to keep in touch with them.

Annual General Meeting 2024

There had been no AGM since 2019 and TQ asked if it was thought that one was needed. MD said that he thought that it would be worthwhile as it would be good opportunity for the Pastoral Council to report back to the Parish and it may encourage people to come along to hear reports from the various parish groups. TQ said that the CPC minutes were posted on the parish website so people could be aware of what the CPC was discussing. PP asked if there was a mechanism for parishioners to raise issues or give suggestions and CT proposed putting a suggestion box at the back of church. BB suggested that photos of the members of the CPC could be put on the notice board at the back of the church.

MD suggested that an AGM be held later in the year and after some discussion the date of Tuesday June 25th was decided upon. CT said that it would be good opportunity for parishioners to meet

the CPC and tell them what they wanted. TQ said that notices would be put in the Bulletin beforehand to advertise the AGM.

Prayers for next meeting

CT offered to do the prayers for the next meeting.

Any Other Business

Eucharistic Ministers

PP asked if there were any plans to recruit new Eucharistic Ministers. PL said that the parish was lucky to have a good number of Eucharistic Ministers but it would be good to recruit some younger ministers. CT said that bringing the issue up at the AGM might be a good way of recruiting some new Eucharistic Ministers.

The talk turned to volunteers in general and PL said that St Joseph's was very well served with volunteers. FrMW echoed that and said that St Joseph's was very fortunate to have a large number of volunteers especially when compared with other churches. MD thought that the AGM might be a good opportunity of recruiting more volunteers when people found out how many opportunities there were.

Celebration of the Lamesley Martyrs

MD said that July 24th was the Feast of the Martyrs of the Diocese and he suggested that the end of July would be a good time for a Mass in the Church grounds to commemorate the martyrs especially the Lamesley Martyrs. He said that the former rector of the English College at Valladolid, Canon Paul Farrer was now the Dean of St Mary's Cathedral in Middlesbrough and could probably be prevailed on to be the main celebrant. He said that he would try to find out if Canon Paul would be available

Lifetime Achievement

CT said that parishioner Anne Marshall had been singled out for a Lifetime Achievement Award for all the good work that she had done for many organisations and that it would be presented to her by the Lord Mayor of Gateshead on the 26th June. TQ suggested that the meeting passed on our grateful thanks for all the magnificent work that Anne has done and continues to do over the years.

Date and Time of next meeting

The date of the next meeting was set for Sunday 12th May at 7pm.

CT closed the meeting with a prayer.