

To be agreed by CPC Committee at May 2021 Meeting

Birtley St Joseph's Church Pastoral Council Meeting

Sunday 11th April 2021

Present

Bernadette Bartlett,	BB	Doreen Cantwell,	DC
Mick Davison,	MD	Peter Lavery (Deacon),	P
Fr Mark Millward (Parish Priest),	FrMM	Peter Monaghan (Minutes),	PM
Tom Quigley (Chair)	TQ	Margaret Taylor,	MT
Sophie Taylor,	ST	Catherine Tumelty,	CT

Guests

Kevin Haigh,	KH	Mark Harris,	MH
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Apologies

Hilda Fraser,	HF	Michelle Irwin,	MI
Margaret Stafford,	MS	Fr Martin Wheaton	FrMW

TQ warmly welcomed CPC members to the meeting and also guests Kevin Haigh and Mark Harris

PL opened the meeting with a prayer asking us to follow the example of Pope Francis.

Matters arising from the Minutes of Previous Meeting

Elizabethville Cemetery

TQ said that he had received confirmation on 17th March that his email had reached Squadron Leader Tickell but had since heard nothing. TQ said that he now held out no great hope of a reply to his email and was debating the next step. As spring was now here and the cemetery needed some urgent maintenance, he thought that as a short term measure the best idea would be to find out the name of the contractor who dealt with the graveyard at Our Blessed Lady Immaculate (OBLI) and obtain an estimate for maintaining the cemetery. FrMM said that he should be able to obtain the details from Audrey Huntley(AH).

TQ said that it was hoped to register the cemetery with Historic England as a park or garden of Special Historic Interest and to that end he had written to Jean Atkinson of the Birtley Heritage Group (BHG) asking if it was possible for the BHG to help with the process by preparing a report to provide the historical context. Jean was very keen to do this and had offered to help.

Holy Mass

MT said that the last meeting had spoken of an intended Mass on Friday at 10am but this had not happened. FrMM said that this was entirely up to FrMW and asked PL to follow it up with him. He said that once the new Mass had been confirmed then it would be necessary to liaise with AH and MH to provide a link in the Parish Bulletin

Action Point

PL to contact FrMW re the intended Mass on Friday at 10am.

Triduum

It was agreed that the Triduum had gone well and had been very well attended although some people didn't attend after booking. MD said that he thought that some people had been confused with the different Mass times of 5pm at St Joseph's (St Jos) and 7pm at St John Boste(SJB) and had turned up at the wrong time. MT said there had been some problems placing people at either end of the big benches.

Year of St Joseph

MD said that he was looking for volunteers to record the reflections for the Novena. A suggestion was made that some of the schoolchildren could help but MD said that he thought that content of the reflections would be more suitable for adults. MD said that he required up to 18 people and would put notice in the Bulletin.

YMG Bookmarks for Parishioners and Schoolchildren

CT said that all of the prayer cards/bookmarks for the Year of St Joseph had been sent out to the schools and churches and there had been very positive feedback.

Installation of TV Cameras in St Joseph's Church

MH said that he had been involved in discussions with FrMW on improving the cameras. He said that St Joseph's would need a new camera and additions to the sound system. He said St Joseph's required a dedicated church services system which was comprehensive although not cheap but it had proved worth it for the parish of St John XXIII. An improved system for St Joseph's which could be used in Facebook and YouTube could cost about £2,500 with an extra £20-30 for data use. Church Services TV cost £110 for the basic stream and 184 for the advanced stream.

MD said that he would prefer the advanced stream. He asked if it would be possible to link the stream with the projector as the current system which used the laptop, had been used with music recorded by the schools to link with the projector but this had failed because the wifi signal in Birtley wasn't very good. MH said that mobile wifi was probably the best system as using an ethernet cable to connect from the router would have to run through 2 networks. BB asked if it would be possible to use the St John XXIII system and MH said that that would be up to the 2 parishes to negotiate. He said that Our Lady Queen of Peace (OLQP) and SJB had the best systems and that OLQP had been installed by Church Services.

MD said that to go ahead with the system would require the approval of the Finance Committee and MH said that a team of 3 people would be required to run the camera, at least one trained operative would need to be at Mass/services when the system is being used. He said that he would be happy to help with the initial training and could be present for the first few Masses. He said that a PTZ camera would be preferable as that could pan and zoom and that would make the stream much more alive.

MH left the meeting at this point.

Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the last CPC meeting on March 14th 2021 were agreed.

CAFOD

KH said that he had been the parish CAFOD representative for a number of years but now felt that the time had come to hand over the representation to Rachel Prior (RP) in her capacity as parishioner rather than parish schoolteacher. KH said there were 2 main areas that

he was dealing with, one was concerning Laudato Si which was the Catholic perspective on the environment and the other was with Tyne and Wear Citizens which was a broad based organisation in which many Catholics including Father Chris Hughes were involved. TQ thanked KH for all the work he had done in linking the parish with CAFOD and his work as a fundraiser. MD said that the partnership as well as the parish would continue to explore the avenues which KH had been looking at as a partnership project and that there was a great opportunity for greater coverage and involvement.

KH left the meeting at this point.

Sacraments

Holy Communion

PL said that the most urgent Holy Communion which were Year 5 children would be celebrated before the end of May. He said that there would be a 6 week programme to prepare the current Year 4 for Holy Communion and that they would receive their first Holy Communion from September when hopefully things would be back to normal.

Confirmation and Baptisms

PL said that there were 2 candidates for Confirmation. He also said that the majority of outstanding baptisms would be held in the summer when the restrictions were eased although a few would be celebrated at Mass before then. FrMM said that Government regulations meant that standalone activities such as Baptism could not take place until after 17th May.

St Joseph's Church Property Update

PL said that there had been two weeks of inactivity on the site but the contractors were re-summing activity on Monday April 12th.

Sanctuary

- Roof repairs - ridge re-pointed, gutters repaired & stonework re-pointed
- Decoration - plaster repairs, oil-based paint, new sockets (2) & sanctuary lamp
- Statues - St Joseph re-located, Madonna & Child refurbished & possibly new plinths.

North and South Porches

- Roof repairs – lead flashings & slates, cast-iron gutters & downpipes
- Decoration – plaster repairs, oil-based paint & refurbishment of doors?

North Aisle

- Roof repairs – lead flashing & slates, new ridge to Lady Chapel.
- Decoration – plaster repairs & redecoration adjoining North door?

New paths

- Graves & headstones re-located to boundary stone wall
- Existing headstones – repaired & levelled to ensure Health & Safety for visitors.
- Indian sandstone path (1.6m wide) to North door & then to Lourdes Grotto
- Concrete apron – ramp from North porch, drains cleaned & repairs to broken concrete.

Lourdes Grotto

- Paved area – to be extended using paving from North porch & power-hosed
- Seating – additional Memorial benches to be located.

Lawns

- Ground levelling – graded to new paths and a gentle gradient onto concrete apron
- Turf – laid to all areas including the Garden of Remembrance – 1000+ sq. metres.

Garden of Remembrance

- Existing graves – to be retained and refurbished
- Boundary with house garden – fence repairs, compost heap removed & removal of tree stumps
- North brick wall – creation of rockery, repairs & refurbishment for memorial plaques.

Memorial benches

CT had been asked to source memorial benches and presented a list of benches and photos of them for the meeting to study. It was felt that if possible the most durable and cost effective locally produced benches should be chosen as then it would be possible to view them before buying. PL recommended that composite plastic ones should be chosen as they would be easier to maintain and would just require a hose-down. The timber benches in the area had not weathered well and one was actually falling apart. PL said that the contractors were coming back tomorrow (12th April) and would be completing the paving at the grotto and that should accommodate another six benches. It was agreed that PL and CT should look at the benches available, choose the most suitable and hopefully get a group discount. PL would also speak to the people who have provided the current benches regarding the transfer of plaques.

Boundary Walls

North

- Stone Wall - trees and ivy to be cleared from adjoining garden
- Stone and brick walls - Allan Sexton to repair and repoint.

South and West

- MGM Limited – recommended by the Diocese & currently working at St John's
- Replacement of stone (2 square metres) – weathered sandstone available on-site
- Comprehensive repair & repointing (121.2sq. metres) – NHL 3.5 lime mortar
- Enquiries made to Gateshead MBC for financial contribution.

FrMM said that with the "Place of Worship" grant scheme, it should be possible to claim back the VAT on the work. TQ said a big thank you was required for PL and Pauline Lavery for all the work they had done inside the church while work was suspended outside. FrMM echoed this and also thanked all those who had been involved with the scheme. TQ said that he had been on the Facebook site and there were many positive comments on the improvements to the grounds.

Future Fundraising

CT reminded the meeting that following the first lockdown Ann Marshall had been in contact with former parishioner Mark McCann who was now a professional singer and entertainer and he had offered to perform in a free charity event which would have the dual effect of raising money and being a good social event to bring the parish together. **(reference - October CPC Minutes)**

Schools Update

St Benet's

BB said that the transition to the Bishop Wilkinson Trust was continuing. She said that the return of the children to school had been smooth and passed without incident. She said that there was a lot going on at school with virtual liturgies which went down well with children and parents.

BB said that there were currently limited numbers in the nursery, She said that attempts were being made to promote the nursery in the Bulletin and social media.

St Joseph's

MI was unable to be present at the meeting. TQ said the schools had been very active in the Walk for Water and had been developing extensive programmes for the Year of St Joseph. He said that there was currently a magnificent display of the Stations of the Cross in the school windows so people outside could see them.

Prayers for Next Meeting:

TQ offered to provide the prayers for the next meeting.

Any Other Business:

Dates and Times of CPC Meeting

ST said that some members of the CPC were unable to attend Sunday evening meetings and wondered if it would be possible to find another meeting day which would be suitable for all members. TQ said that some people were unhappy with technology and preferred person to person meetings. It was suggested that the minutes were used to ask whether people would prefer a different day or time to Sunday at 7pm.

Action Point:

All CPC members to make known whether they would prefer a day or time for meetings other than Sunday evenings at 7pm.

Next meeting:

It was decided that the next meeting should be on Sunday 9th May 2021 at 7pm

PL closed the meeting with the Lord's Prayer.