

To be agreed by CPC Committee at April 2022 Meeting

Birtley St Joseph's Church Pastoral Council Meeting

Sunday 13th March 2022

Present

Bernadette Bartlett,	BB	Mick Davison,	MD
Hilda Fraser,	HF	Monica Kelsey	MK
Peter Lavery (Deacon),	PL	Peter Monaghan (Minutes),	PM
Tom Quigley (Chair)	TQ	Margaret Taylor,	MT
Catherine Tumelty,	CT	Fr Martin Wheaton	FrMW*

Apologies

Doreen Cantwell,	DC	Michelle Irwin,	MI
Graeme McConnell	GMC	Fr Jim O'Keefe	JOK
John Sexton	JS	Margaret Stafford,	MS

* FrMW arrived after the meeting had started

It had been International Women's Day during the week so MK provided prayers on the theme of being a woman. She said that in his life on earth Jesus had challenged stereotypes by being especially strong on behalf of women and and treated all equally.

TQ welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Minutes of the previous meeting on 13th February 2022 and Matters Arising Meeting Nights

All present agreed that the presence of a priest was essential at all meetings but MD said that JOK had trouble attending on Sunday evenings and had indicated that Thursday evening was best for him. TQ said that Thursday evening was not ideal for him but that he realised that the presence of JOK was very important for the meeting so it would be better to change the meeting night to Thursdays. MD said that he would liaise with JOK. TQ suggested that as Thursday could be a difficult night for him to attend it might be a good idea to nominate a vice chair and asked members of the meeting to consider putting themselves forward for the position.

Church TV

MD said that the streaming was very successful but said that more volunteers were required for operating the cameras as there were currently only 2 operators. He said that anyone interested should contact him. PL suggested that it may be possible to get some 6th formers interested in camera operation.

Sunday Mass at St Joseph's Birtley

MD said that the campaign for a Sunday Mass at St Joseph's was still ongoing. There had been some confusion over what the requirement was which was just for a morning Mass on alternative Sundays with no alternative service on the blank Sunday. MD said that JOK thought that this may be setting a precedent and may need the approval of the Bishop. CT asked if there had been any comeback on the suggestion that she had put in about Mass being streamed in to St Joseph's on Sunday mornings and MD said that this may have to go to the Bishops of England and Wales for authorisation.

Parish Response to Synod

MD said that his draft response had been checked by MK among others and had now been edited down to 2 pages. He said that he had now completed the task of collating all the re-

sponses from the other parishes in the partnership as well as responses from other partnerships into a coherent whole on behalf of the Lay Pastoral Forum(LPF) and passed them to the Bishop. He said that responses from the clergy, Council of Deacons, religious orders in the diocese and all the other organisations would also be passed to the Bishop who now had several weeks to turn all the submissions into a diocesan response.

MD said that there was a concern among the LPF that some of the many issues raised in the various responses to the Synod would be sidelined rather than addressed immediately. He said that issues such as the role of the laity, the role of women in the church, LGB-TQ, the response to young people and religious education needed to be addressed quickly at partnership and diocesan level rather than be delayed until after the Synod

*FrMW arrived at the meeting at this point.

Season of Lent Reconciliation

FrMW said that he was creating a booklet on Reconciliation during Lent. He said that the clergy were planning on setting up services of reconciliation in each parish rather than offering individual reconciliation.

Holy Week Services

PL said that services for Holy Week had been allocated to each church and that no church was celebrating all the services. He said that St Joseph's had a service on Good Friday, an Easter Vigil Mass and an Easter Sunday morning Mass at 11:00am.

PL said that Angela Sammut was arranging a Liturgy of Reconciliation for the Year 4 pupils at both St Benet's and St Joseph's.

Queen's Platinum Jubilee

MD said that the Parish Centre had planned a family night at the centre for the Saturday of the Jubilee weekend and Ann Marshall had also suggested the afternoon of Sunday 5th June for the celebration for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. MT said that the space behind the church could be used for a picnic and people could bring their own food. CT suggested putting something in the Bulletin to inform people of the plan and also to ask for volunteers.

MD said that Ann had sent off for a pack from the organisers of the Jubilee and MT said that she was happy to talk to Ann about organising the event once that had arrived.

The minutes of the last CPC meeting on 13th February 2022 were then agreed.

Sound System in Church

PM said that he had raised this issue because he had been stewarding on Saturday 5th March and had been having trouble hearing the readings at the back of church. He said that he realised that Father Uchenna who was soft spoken had been celebrating Mass on that night but other people had also commented on the poor sound. BB said that people at Mass on Saturday 12th March had also spoken of having problems hearing the service and readings. MD said that the Live streaming was using the church sound system for picking up the service and readings but was experiencing no problems. He said that the general opinion of mass goers was that the sound was good at the back and the front where the speakers are and not so good in the middle of the church. He said that it was possible that following the pandemic when church was a lot quieter not all the readers were projecting their voices. He emphasised that with Live streaming readers needed to speak up and project themselves more.

Restored Liturgy Altar Servers

PL said that the altar servers were now allowed and said that there was a need to train some younger ones. MD said that JS was now in charge of the altar servers and he was planning

to contact the 2 school years of altar servers who had been trained prior to the pandemic to invite them back. He said that after Easter, JS was going to work with PL through the schools to contact Year 5 and 6 pupils to offer them the opportunity of training as altar servers. He said the plan after that was to contact the Year 4 pupils to offer them the chance to train.

Readers and Bidding Prayers

Work was in progress to recruit new readers and writers of Bidding Prayers

Procession of Offertory Gifts

It was hoped to restart Offertory Processions soon.

Communion for Sick and Housebound

PL said that it was important during the Live Streaming to show Eucharistic ministers being blessed by the priest to take Holy Communion out to the Sick and Housebound. MD said that there was a need to recruit new Eucharistic ministers as a lot of the older ministers were now reluctant to do it.

Voluntary Help from Comprehensive School Student (Pope John Paul II Award)

CT said that she had been contacted by a student offering to deliver bulletins as part of her work for the Pope John Paul II Award. She said that with the relaxation of restrictions there were now fewer bulletins to deliver so asked PL if he could think of any other roles which the student could perform on Friday evening and Sunday morning when they were available. Several suggestions were put forward at the meeting. MK said that she had worked with Pope John Paul II Award students and said that now restrictions were lifted there was more chance to do work around the church. MD said that parishes and partnerships in the diocese had made suggestions to hold another census to create a usable database within GDPR regulations and wondered whether Pope John Paul II Award students would be able to help with this. PL said that a family at Ouston had offered to work at the garden at the Church but as the maintenance of the Church garden was already in very capable hands it may be better for them to help in the garden around the Parish Centre. PL suggested that CT go back to Jo Proctor the chaplain at Cardinal Hume to get students to help out at church welcoming people. MK said that Pope John Paul II Award students could write bidding prayers for church and the general opinion around the meeting was that there would be a lot more for Pope John Paul II Award students to do as things opened up.

Season of Lent - Parish and Partnership

Palm Sunday and Holy Week

MD said that he and JS needed to know who the celebrants would be for Palm Sunday and Holy Week so he could organise the services for the altar servers. PL said that Fr Uchenna was saying Mass on Palm Sunday and FrMW would be celebrating Good Friday and the Easter Vigil Mass.

Suggested Display of photographs of recently deceased parishioners

CT said that she and Ann Marshall had recently attended a church where the Ministry of Consolation had displayed photographs of recently deceased parishioners so people could be aware of who they were and keep them in their prayers. Ann felt that following the easing of restrictions, this may be an appropriate time to do something similar at St Joseph's. CT said that permission would be asked of the families before any display of photographs and the meeting thought that this may be a worthwhile idea.

Sacraments

Baptisms

PL said that there were a lot of Baptisms this year and said that most of them were being arranged for Saturday afternoons to give the parents the opportunity to have them as part of the Mass or to be able to attend Mass after the Baptism.

Holy Communion

PL said that the lack of a Sunday Mass had caused some difficulties in arranging suitable dates for this but the dates of Saturday 18th June (Corpus Christi) and Saturday 25th June had now been agreed.

Reconciliation

PL said that these were now up to date thanks to the hard work of FrMW. He said that St Joseph's had been fortunate in arranging Reconciliation for the children as some other parishes had a 3 year backlog.

Journey of Faith - Easter Vigil

PL said that there were 4 candidates from St Joseph's this year and an average of 4 people from each church. He said that a bus had been arranged for all candidates to attend the Rite of Election at the cathedral on March 6th and they had met Bishop Robert. He said that the ceremony of accepting the candidates into the church was part of the Easter Vigil service..

Marriage

PL said that there were going to be 15 marriages across the Partnership in the coming year and that 5 of them would be held at St Joseph's.

Schools Update

St Joseph's Joint Federation

MI could not be present at the meeting and TQ said that 2 candidates had been shortlisted for the vacancy of executive head teacher and interviews were due to be held on 24th March.

Any Other Business:

Ukraine

MD said that some refugees could be in the Diocese and wondered if enough space was being made available. He said that the Diocese would be sponsoring people and cited the empty presbytery at OBLI as somewhere that could be used. MT said that currently we could help financially while we waited for people to arrive. MK said that St Benet's was fund raising for the Ukraine and was making donations to the Ukraine Appeal. MD said that there a Ukrainian lady lived in Chester-le-Street and that he could ask her if she would like to come to the parish Centre to give a talk. He said that a poster could be created to advertise the talk. The meeting agreed that MD could ask the Ukrainian lady to come to give a talk in the Parish Centre.

Prayers for Next Meeting:

MT offered to do the prayers for the next meeting.

Date and Time of next meeting:

TQ said a definite time for the next meeting couldn't yet be arranged but said that it was anticipated that they would be held on Thursday evenings in the future.

MK closed the meeting with a "Hail Mary" linking in to International Women's Day.