

Sacred Heart Parish Open Meeting

Sunday 18th November 15.00 in Parish Hall

Copies of all the reports* referred to in these minutes are available on the parish website or in the church porch. Copies of reports from Proclaim and CTSI : 5pm, 8am, 9.30am and 11am Masses ; Finance and Building : RE and Liturgy: Social Committee: S.V.P and Heritage Open Days were available for all who attended the meeting as well as copies of the updated Constitution.

Eighteen parishioners and Fr Karol were present. Apologies were received from Rita and Brian O'Neill and Rika and Michael Sanderson.

Fr Karol welcomed all present and prayed to the Holy Spirit for discernment of the decisions which would be made.

Chairman's Report – Fiona Smith

Firstly, I have to thank Elizabeth for all her help in supporting me in my new role at a time when the Parish is going from strength to strength and involved in so many great spiritual, community and social activities.

Also, a huge thanks to David for re- structuring the Constitution and the, mammoth task of updating the Parish data information..

In my new role I have attended the Council of Laity meeting in the Summer and was also very fortunate to attend the Adoremus National Eucharistic Pilgrimage and Congress with Fr Karol and Elizabeth in September. The event was attended by thousands of Catholics both young and old from around the UK alongside an impressive line up of the UK's Bishops and Clergy. There was an array of inspiring speakers and workshops to attend. The whole event was incredibly spiritual and educational. And, will be the theme for our Advent talks.

The ongoing work by the Evangelizing Group 'Proclaim' continues which has been highlighted in the Diocesan newspaper, so news is spreading about the group's great work led and encouraged by Fr Karol.

Ellen provided us with some lovely feedback from the visitors who attended the Church during Heritage Open Days 2018 in September.

Thanks to all who have submitted their reports for this afternoon's meeting.

Finance Statement

Paul Kent gave an explanation of the attached report*. The current account balance has increased by £22,246 due to the payment from Alive in Faith. Due to maintenance work done in the presbytery and church the forecasted costs have risen by £10,000. However the payment for the Courtyard Project was £55,975 and not £57,790 as was the estimate.

Diocesan Levies of £8, 276 are due in January 2019 leaving a final accounts balance of £52,700.

PSC Constitution

The Parish Steering Committee had recently agreed to a review of the Constitution* as there were a few anomalies that needed to be corrected. As the document was due to be reviewed in 2019 (done every 5 years) it was considered an opportune time for the review. David Kerr had completed the review which was presented and approved by the members of the PSC at the meeting on 5th November. However this decision has to be ratified at an Open meeting by at least 75% of those present. The amended Constitution was accepted unanimously.

Community Life

At their last meeting the members of the Parish Steering Committee invited Michal Wojcik to give a short report* on the Polish Community in our parish as Michal is the Polish representative on the PSC. Michal thanked everyone for including us in the parish activities. He said for many Polish parishioners it feels like home as they can worship in their own language and the singing with a friendly atmosphere. Mass is celebrated in Polish on every Sunday, previously it was just Christmas and Easter, making an increase in parish numbers. Bishop Alan Hopes encouraged Fr Karol to celebrate Mass every week in Polish and he has also instigated a Mass in Romanian once a month at OLEM.

Proclaim and CTSI

David Kerr gave a short report* on the progress of the parish Proclaim group in which he included an update on CTSI – Churches Together in St Ives which is the ecumenical dimension of our Proclaim outreach.

Parishioners in the Proclaim Group had made four “door to door” excursions in August, September, October and November while others stayed behind to pray before the Blessed Sacrament. Information on these visits is available in the Diocesan newspapers and on the website.

CTSI

Fr Karol made an excellent start as Chairman of Churches Together at the meeting on 12th November. Sacred Heart Parish now has full representation with three lay persons and of course Fr Karol.

Main events for 2019 are:

January 8th Next meeting at Sacred Heart Hall

January 18th to 25th Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity, united Service at 4pm in Christian Fellowship Church.

March 8th at 11am World Day of Prayer at Sacred Heart Church.

April 19th Good Friday Procession to be written by Fr Karol and led by him through the town.

RE and Liturgy Report*

Elizabeth announced two amendments to her report. First Communion class numbers had risen to 36. The date of the Children's Nativity Play has been decided as December 23rd at 3pm.

Fr Karol's Report

Brother Jarek who was in our parish for a few months decided to seek a leave of absence from the La Salette Order for four months until the end of November so he is no longer serving in our parish. There will be a visit from the Provincial in early December.

Mass attendance has risen from 300 to 400 over the last year making an increase in the number of weddings and Baptisms.

The presbytery now has two ensuite bedrooms and the other bedroom adjoins the bathroom. The parish hall needs refurbishing and some of the kitchen appliances need to be replaced.

A new Sound System will be installed on 29th November with new microphones and speakers and it will have an automatic mixer. The Loop system will also be replaced to conform with new regulations. The inclusive price for all of this work is £2000.

Fr Karol's, parish car is now 11 years old and need to be replaced which it is hoped will happen in the near future.

Fr Stanislaus will be the supply priest to cover Fr Karol's holidays in the summer but he will also come to assist at Christmas. A religious house has been formed from St Ives and Peterborough parishes. Fr Peter has left Peterborough to move to Illinois, USA leaving Fr Adam, the house superior, and Fr Valdi. Fr Edward is the superior of the La Salette house covering Dagenham and Rainham and Fr Slovak is superior of Harlow and Goodmayes.

A volunteer is required to train the altar servers on a regular basis. If a suitable parishioner could be found they may act as MC as well.

There is no youth representative on the PSC as there is a vacancy for an 18 to 25 year old and if someone could be found it may mean that a Youth Group could be started again if a suitably trained leader was available.

Fiona's daughter is keen to start a parents' and toddlers group in the parish. It is suggested that Becky consult the Parish Diary to ascertain when the hall is available.

Alive in Faith has been a successful initiative but now needs an input of more parishioners to join as some of the previous ones have died or withdrawn their pledges.

Fr Karol has been in discussion with some of the presbytery neighbours over the pruning of the trees. It has been agreed that the trees are their property but we will pay half of the maintenance fee. Some areas of the garden fence is in disrepair and needs replacing. The front steps and porch area of the presbytery require repair and a handrail needs to be installed for use of less able parishioners.

Fr Simon Blakesley, the chairman of the Marriage Tribunal and now PP at St Laurence's Cambridge has offered to come and give a talk for those in irregular marriage situations. It was suggested that it would be best in January, February or March with a time to be decided.

There have been two occasions recently when parishioners have been asked to take their crying children/babies out of Mas by other parishioners. This has caused upset to the parents. A deal of sensitivity on both sides is required.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

This will be decided when the date for the next Council of Laity meeting is known.