

Justice and Peace in Catholic Leamington

The Presbytery, 3^A Dormer Place, Leamington Spa, CV32 5AA

Meeting 135

March 25th, 2019, at Our Lady's

Notes

Those present were: Jenny Armstrong, Brian Austin, Janice Austin, Christa-Maria Cross, Anne Elson, Anna Godwin, Richard Gordon, Lynda Gould, and Jonathan Holden.

Apologies: Anne and Michael Kirby.

The meeting opened with the SPAN prayer and a reflection on the gospel for the 4th Sunday of Lent (Year C), Luke 15: 1-3, 11-32.

1. Matters arising from the Minutes of the 25th February meeting at St Peter's

- Brian reported that the soup and bread lunch on Family Fast Friday had been successful in taking donations of £160 for, and raising awareness of, CAFOD's Lent campaign.
- Jenny said that, during Fair Trade Fortnight, there had been stalls at both St Peter's and Our Lady's selling fair trade goods, and the leaflet on local availability of fair trade goods had been well received. Some of the leaflets had been distributed in the Royal Priors at the 'Green Weekend' in March. Anne Elson said Tesco had a large poster outside their supermarket advertising fair trade goods. Brian had found fair trade bananas and chocolate at Lidl.
- Fr Andy had asked Jenny to give a short talk at St Joseph's on how to become a Fair Trade Parish, and she had eventually found fair trade Easter eggs at Fr John's request.

2. Rosary intention for April.

- In the light of the Pope's prayer intention for March of persecuted Christians, the recent Lenten Alms collection for Friends of the Holy Land on behalf of Christians in Israel/Palestine and the signing of cards next weekend for prisoners of conscience, it was agreed that the April intention should be: **'We pray for persecuted Christians and all prisoners of conscience'**.

Lynda to put on the J&P noticeboard in the church; Jonathan to enter in the Newsletter and on the website.

3. Poverty and Homelessness

- Janice reported that Emma Bird was starting on 27th March as a project worker for the Way Ahead Project. She said that the Saturday activities run by the SFG would restart in April, after a period of suspension because there were not enough people to run them.
- The number of people dropping in to the Salvation Army Centre in the last week was over 100, averaging more than 28 a day. Anna said that numbers using the Leamington Night Shelter were rising again after a dip when Walsgrove House opened. It was felt that the extensive form-filling when people first register at Walsgrove House and the fact (as Lianne Kirkman had commented to Richard) that the staff there do not yet know their clients personally made a less welcoming impression on the users than they received at the Salvation Army and the Night Shelter. Brian thought this was because the attitude of local government employees doing a job could not be the same as the Christian ethic of Salvation Army and Night Shelter volunteers

4. Climate Change actions.

- Brian said that Matt Western's office had offered provisionally 18th April for the postponed visit. Since many would be attending the Maundy Thursday service that evening, it was not suitable.
Brian to write back asking for a different date.
- Brian mentioned also that CAFOD were organizing a coach going to London for a big demonstration with the Climate Coalition on Wednesday 26th June, but had no details yet.

5. **Prisoners of Conscience cards (at St Peter's and St Joseph's on March 29th and 30th).**
 - Diana had told Jenny that preparations were going well for the signing, and she had sufficient volunteers to help. Anna had seen the cards produced by the St Joseph's Arts Group and thought they looked very accomplished and were reproduced to a high standard. It was noted that only a short announcement could be made at mass as it was on the same dates as the Lenten Alms appeal for Kindaid.

6. **LiveSimply Plans**
 - Jenny hoped to organize a *LiveSimply* mass around October at St Joseph's (similar to that at Our Lady's last November) even though it is not yet a *LiveSimply* parish.
 - She said they might have a stall (and 'gazebo') at the Ecofest run by Warwick District Council in the Pump Room Gardens on Saturday 5th May. The £30 fee had been waived for small organizations such as ours.
 - On Bank Holiday Monday 6th May there would be a *LiveSimply* walk round Newbold Comyn starting at 3 pm, with stops for reflections on refugees' stories (as last year).

7. **Leamington Peace Festival (June 15th-16th)**
 - Brian had not had any reply to his email to the organizers. **Brian to chase.**
 - Lynda had met Emma Rayment who said her youth group were still keen to contribute a peace display to the Festival. Emma goes into Trinity frequently, where the Pax Christi group is still functioning, and could see if they might participate.
 - Anna to chase up St Anthony's to see if they are interested in contributing a display.**
 - Brian to email Jean Daly to ask if she can again organize refreshments in church.**

8. **Any Other Business**
 - Jenny had received an email from Anne and Michael Kirby suggesting that Catholic Leamington should respond to Pope Francis' appeal that every church should support a refugee family. Richard pointed out that there were very few refugees or asylum seekers in Leamington, in contrast to Coventry. He had several times asked Penny Halpin (founder of the 'Welcome Leamington' group supporting the half dozen Syrian refugee families accommodated by Warwick District Council under the Government's admission scheme) whether she needed any more help: she said they had enough volunteers and funds for their needs. He knew of a particular refugee family in Lillington in severe need of furniture and/or funds. It was suggested that he approach first Helping Hands and Action 21 for furniture and SPAN or Kindaid for finance.
 - Jenny to reply to Anne and Michael outlining the difficulties in implementing their suggestion and Richard to send a more detailed response in the light of his experience.**

8. **Future Meetings**
 - The next meeting will be at 7.30 pm in the hall at **St Joseph's, Whitnash**, on Monday April 29th, when the reflection will be on the gospel for the third Sunday of Easter (Year C), John 21: 1-19.
 - Subsequent meetings will be at 7.30 pm on Mondays May 20th and June 24th (both in St Peter's Davenport Room), July 29th (Our Lady's), our annual review meeting at 2 pm Tuesday September 3rd (Davenport Room), then 7.30 pm Mondays September 30th (St Joseph's), October 28th and November 25th (both in the Davenport Room).

The meeting closed with the *Pax Christi* prayer.