

Minutes of the Meeting of the Catholic Leamington Parish Pastoral Council

Held on 23rd January 2020 at Our Lady's

Present: xxxxx

1. The meeting opened with prayers.

2. **Apologies were received from xxxxxx**

3. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 19th September 2019 were approved.

4. **Matters arising from the minutes**

It was reported that the Alpha course had been run last term at Trinity School with 25 – 30 people attending. This included two adult groups and one young people's group.

5. **Parish visitations by Archbishop Bernard and Bishop William**

Catholic Leamington will be visited by Archbishop Bernard and Bishop William over the week-end of 21/22 February. Bishop William will be visiting St Joseph's, arriving on Saturday to visit the sick and say the week-end Masses. He will meet parishioners after the Masses.

Fr John is planning for the Archbishop to meet as many people as possible from St Peters and Our Lady's. He has booked St Peter's Hall on Saturday afternoon. He is using the 5 priorities of the diocesan plan as a model to link the various ministries: Evangelisation, Formation, Worship & Sacramental Life, Charity & Social Outreach and Family & Youth. He plans to invite the various groups to meet the Archbishop to give him a brief overview of their ministries. Fr John will be putting a timetable together for the week-end. He had hoped that the Archbishop could come on the Friday but that was not possible. The Archbishop would also like to meet the heads and chairs of governors of the 5 schools in the parish. There will be a Parish lunch at St Peters on the Sunday.

There should also be an opportunity for the Joint Parish Council to meet the Archbishop (and possibly Bishop William) at some stage. Fr John and Fr Andy will discuss how this could work.

The closing Mass for the visitation will be on Tuesday 31st March at St Francis Church, Kenilworth.

6. **Report on the youth work**

The Unite Youth Group is now well established. Running weekly at St Joseph's it has between 15 – 20 young people age 9 – 13.

The youth worker organised first aid training in November. 6 people attended this very valuable training and are now qualified first aiders.

Around 30 young people have registered to go to the Fearless retreat at Alton Castle early in

March. These are from the Unite Youth Group, St Peter's school and a small group from Trinity school. The youth worker is investigating the cost of a coach to the event.

There was some discussion about how the Catholic Primary schools in the area could be better linked with Trinity to encourage more young people to see what Trinity has to offer. This will take some time but the youth work will help. There will be three retreat days for St Peter's school pupils (one for Confirmation, one for Reconciliation and one for First Holy Communion) and Trinity have offered their facilities as a venue. It may be possible for other schools' pupils to be invited to some of these retreats.

It was suggested that the youth worker speaks at all the Masses to publicise the youth work, both to encourage young people to take part and also to let everyone know that we value the work that is being done. This would enable us to do an appeal later in the year to support the work. The youth worker could not go to all the churches over a weekend but she suggested that each church could have an ambassador, who would be a point of contact for the young people and also keep parishioners informed about what is happening.

7. Pastoral development in the Parish

a) Creating a parish directory

The PPC member who was working on this was not at the meeting but the chairperson reported that they had been working on the spreadsheet. At the last meeting it was agreed that a copy of the spreadsheet would be sent round for comments and suggestions but no-one has seen it and we were unable to discuss its merits. There was some discussion again about whether this approach would work and whether parishioners would volunteer their skills. Some thought that personal invitation was the best way to get volunteers. The PPC members requested that they see what has been done so far so that it could be considered at the next meeting.

We need more volunteers in every area of parish life. As the current volunteers get older the situation can only get worse. It was suggested that, as the number of priests is declining, in future many more aspects of parish life will have to be run by lay people on a voluntary basis.

Many Catholics come to Mass each week but do not want to get more involved. Volunteering requires commitment and a willingness to prioritise their faith and faith community in their lives. One of the clergy said that there is a bigger issue of ensuring that when they come to Mass they 'enter the divine' and encounter Jesus in the Eucharist. A truly faith-filled community will want to reach out to others in thanksgiving for what they have received. In parishes, who have succeeded in increasing parishioner involvement, it was the personal relationship with Christ that grew first followed by a greater commitment to serve the parish and more involvement in parish outreach activities.

b) The God who speaks

The Year of the Word starts on Sunday 26th January and parishioners have been asked to bring their Bibles to Mass that weekend for a blessing for them and their Bible reading. There are various courses and events planned to encourage people throughout the year to read their Bibles. One of the members will see if we can get some more of the Gospels of Matthew for the parish.

c) Re-dedication of England to Our Lady

England was first dedicated to Our Lady in 1381 by King Richard II, and was given the title “Mary’s Dowry.” The Re-dedication will take place at 12noon on Sunday, 29th March 2020 by Cardinal Vincent Nichols.

In preparation Catholics are encouraged to pray a personal prayer of commitment to Our Lady. The National Shrine at Walsingham have produced a version of the Angelus for personal prayer and a free booklet with a 33 day retreat based on St Louis De Montfort's total consecration to Mary. The Parish could register to be part of the consecration and a day's pilgrimage to Walsingham is being planned for later in the year.

d) Young people as Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist

It was agreed that young people who had a maturity of faith and age could be invited to be trained as extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist. This would be at the discretion and invitation of the parish priests only but the youth worker could put forward names to them for consideration.

8. Feedback from Churches Together in Leamington

There was feedback from this group. For the Peace Festival they asked all the churches if they could supply a small team of people to offer healing prayer ministry to the public for a session over the week-end. We thought that we could identify parishioners who had the relevant experience to help with this.

Date of next meeting:

Thursday 30th April 2020 starting at 7pm at St Joseph's