St Michael’s Church, Huntingdon

Inaugural Meeting of Church Council

Thursday 19 April 2018

Present: Father Philip Shryane & 17 others.

Fr Philip opened the meeting with a prayer. There was no agenda as such but a number of issues were discussed.

1 **Parish Meetings**: Father Philip said he had called this meeting as there were no records of previous Parish Council Meetings. The Parish needs a forum for consultation, planning and information. There were two models to consider:

(a) a formal Parish Council appointed in the first year, then elected

(b) an “In-council”, which is more informal and can meet after, or between Masses on Sunday. This is essentially a parish meeting.

The Meeting preferred option (a) but was open to a mix of the two for urgent matters or events.

2 **Mass**: Readers - New readers had been recruited but there was still a shortage. Additional Eucharistic Ministers will be trained up in June for both Masses. Father Philip expressed a preference for readings to be in one of our Church’s principal languages once a month. This will either (a) take the form of repeating the first (English) reading in Tagalog, Malayalam and Lithuanian or (b) relying on the congregation reading the lesson in English mass books. The latter option retains the second reading. The Meeting agreed with the proposition. Music - there is to be a drive to increase singing at mass from our different groups. There is a prospect of a choir at 11 am Mass.

3 **Other Devotions:** Fr Philip asked about introducing Adoration after Mass or in the evening and a weekday benediction.

Fr Philip spoke about the Eucharistic Congress: 7 - 9 September 2018, in Liverpool. The parish has been two allocated places to be filled. The Parish will bear the cost of travel.

A suggestion was made to start 1st Friday Prayers. This will be introduced as Rosary after Mass every month. Another suggestion was that Rosary

could be introduced once a month between the Sunday Masses.

Fr Philip suggested that at some time in the future there should be a Mass with the Anointing of the Sick for the housebound in an afternoon during the week with refreshments. Transport would have to be organised. The meeting agreed with the proposal.

4 **Social Events:**

(a) The Church Barbecue was discussed, we hope to do this during the summer.

Other Suggestions were:

(b) An ‘International Sunday Lunch’ (each community contributes a course.)

(c) Parish monthly lunch.

(d) A Pudding Club’ (for desserts from our communities.)

(e) Cream Tea Party in the Garden one Sunday during the summer with the hope that may be some of our young people will help with serving.

(f) It was also felt the Parish should be more involved in Community Events.

5 **Polish Community and Mass**: The relationship between the Polish Mass goers and the Parish was discussed. A gift of a light-weight green vestment has been made from the Polish community to the parish. It would be good to try to integrate the two communities a little more.

6 **Finance:** The accounts for 2017 were not yet completed. There was an excess of expenditure over income, so we may have to undertake some fundraising in the future. Much of the Diocesan Loan has been paid off. People will be urged to transfer from weekly cash to Standing Orders and take up Gift Aid. There is an urgent need for money counters to relieve pressure on the present crews.

7 **Fabric:** Present confessional is illegal under Safeguarding Rules and Fr Philip thought it would be better to re-instate the side Chapel for a confessional and possibly for a votive candle stand. We could then use the confessional for storage. The outside door could be restored to use and much of the equipment stored could be examined to see do we really need them. The meeting welcomed the proposition.

8 **Any Other Business.**

1. Altar Candles: Fr Philip said donations are coming in to replace the Altar candles.

(b) Papworth: we don’t know how the closure of Papworth Hospital will affect our Indian community based in the village. The Vigil Mass may have to change to accommodate members new shift patterns and travel times.

(c) Papworth Catholic Church: The sale has been held up due to Planning Conditions, but it is moving forward slowly.

(d) The Meeting discussed how to better integrate the different communities.

We will try to plan another meeting in the autumn to move forward on some of these items.

Fr Philip closed the meeting with a prayer and thanks to everyone for attending.

Our parish finances

General situation: at the beginning of 2017 our bank accounts were as follows:

Current account: £21,710

Business Reserve £7,444

Diocesan Account -£17,279

This means that we had **£11,875** in the bank in credit, this is a healthy situation for us at the beginning of the year.

**Income during 2017**

Offertory Collection 31670

Gift Aid income 2462

Donations 398

Legacies 1020

Rent income 1480

Christmas & Easter Offering 1062

Fundraising 66

Mass stipends 223

Stole fees 1450

Sundry income 590

**Total income £40,421**

**Expenditure during 2017**

**Property**

Church maintenance 8278

House maintenance 4913

Council Tax/Rent 2587

Gas/Elec/Water 3313

Insurance 938

Other 1056

**Total 21085**

**Priest’s expenses**

Salary 7188

Housekeeping 501

Car expenses 1103

**Total 8792**

**Diocesan Levies**

Priests’ Training 2944

Schools 6542

Clergy Pension 2816

National Catholic Fund 587

Interest 206

Other 220

**Total 13315**

**Various other items**

Postage and stationary 795

Telephone 770

Repository/Newspapers 278

Liturgical items 3008

Equipment 2232

Sundries 852

**Total 7935**

**This gives a grand total of expenditure of £51,127**

**So, our expenditure exceeded our income by £10,706**, so our healthy situation at the beginning of the year is not so good at the end, because of the way money comes in and goes out, we had **£2,386** in the bank. Hopefully we will do a little better this year.

Thank you very much for your continued support of our parish.

May God bless you and your families.

 *Fr Philip*