

**Minutes for Meeting of St Michael's Parish Pastoral Council,
Sonning Common held on Tuesday 16th November, 2021**

Present: FrM, Dcn BT, MOD, BW, ML, FG, KS

Apologies: SB

FG has decided to step down due to personal commitments

Opening Prayer FrM

Minutes from last meeting

The minutes were agreed.

Matters arising:

Church seating. To increase the number of places for couples but maintain some social distancing KS and DB will put out more seat labels.

Parish newsletters in the church. These are running out for people who do not receive an electronic copy. KS will put 5 in the sacristy for DcnB or FrM can hand out to those who need them.

Quiz and curry evening date – TM to advise.

SAFEGUARDING

Safeguarding is on the agenda to ensure it remains a high priority within the parish. No specific issues.

Only one new person has come forward to help with the children's liturgy. It was confirmed that volunteers have to work in pairs

It was asked if there were enough young children attending 10.30am Mass? There are several children who are younger than year 3 and a couple of children who have not made their First Holy Communion so there may be a need. It was noted the numbers vary from week to week. FrM thought that the numbers might increase after Christmas.

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS

The penance service will be on Monday 20th December 7pm – Canon Fitzpatrick and Fr. Andrew Foster from Watlington will assist FrM with confessions.

Holy Hour very Monday in Advent except the 20th.

KS and FrM will produce a card.

The Advent tree will be going up on the 26th Nov. in time for the 1st Sunday of Advent

MOD asked if we were going to support a charity – FrM suggested CIRDIC

MOD offered to contact CIRDIC to find out what they would like as donations and DB will liaise with SR.

Christmas Masses: for families.

For families with young children 4pm and 5.30pm on Dec 24th. Two Mass to avoid overcrowding of the church. It is anticipated the school will operate a booking system. Need

to liaise with the school so that they are familiar with our seating plan. Assume JW will play the piano at one of the Masses. Would ER be willing to play at the other? 'Midnight' Mass will be at 8pm preceded by carols at 7.30pm. 10.30am Mass on Christmas Day. A booking system is likely to be necessary and it will be important to let parishioners know as soon as this is confirmed.

A Carol Service is planned on December 8th with KS2 children from 6.30pm – 7.15pm.

No specific Christmas guidance yet from the Bishops of England and Wales.

Preparation for First Holy Communion

A complication this year is that children are coming from different schools and hence different bubbles. There are some older children who have not yet made their FHC due to Covid. We do not want the children from outside St Michael's to feel excluded from the group.

FrM will discuss with DW how and where the sessions can be conducted.

Church and school altar servers

FrM wanted to ensure the children were not deprived of the opportunity of serving.

A new set of albs are required for the servers. The opinion of the meeting was that albs rather cassocks and cottas look better. FrM would like to find out what parishioners think. KS to produce picture for people to tick. FrM to follow up buying or getting them made.

75TH ANNIVERSARY PLANNING THE YEAR AND INVOLVING PEOPLE

DB asked if we should ask our Episcopal Vicar to come and celebrate Mass here at St Michael's. FrM agreed this was a good idea and proposed the Patronal weekend

FrM has spoken to the school about a flower festival. Present feeling among the staff at the school is that there would be some people willing but they are the ones who already come to Mass here and FrM would like to involve a wider group of people. Could flowers be prepared at school and delivered to the church? KS asked if we could reuse some of the resources we have here kept in the Flower shed?

A flower festival is hard work and FrM is conscious that the church flower arrangers shouldn't be burdened a major project.

BW asked if people came from the school to set out flowers could parishioners come to the church to provide refreshments?

Important to avoid half terms, SATS week and residential week for year 6

Likely enough volunteers at St Michaels to help the parents if necessary.

We would like to have one or more open days for the wider community. DB will look into what we did for the last Open Day.

DB will also follow up a parish outing to Culham court.

We will go ahead with a pancake but for the parish community

DB will write something about our history over the year for Sonning Common and other local magazines

The idea of having banners made and put up for the 75th anniversary was discussed. All though it an excellent idea. DB will liaise with FG to take this further and report back. Coffee mornings for locals to come into the church as part of our celebrations?

DIOCESAN VISION AND SYNODAL PATHWAY – HOW DO WE PROCEED?

The diocese is combining its own vision with the Synodal Pathway (Walking Together) and has arranged a couple of zoom meetings about pathway. Pope Francis wants it to be a listening exercise to encourage us to listen to each other and those on the fringes or outside the Church. To listen to what each has to say without criticism or prejudice. Each parish or group will collate all that has been shared and then submitted to the diocese.

The Pope is looking for a way to make the Church relevant to the people of the third millennium and to encourage people to reflect on and speak about their faith.

In practical terms meetings should be a time of prayer and reflection and each parish should have at least two people to monitor and feedback on the process.

We need opportunities to come together and gently encourage others to attend. Ideally day and evening meetings to accommodate different people. Propose Zoom meetings for those still isolating.

DB not clear on the time frames yet.

SUSTAINABILITY AND OUR CARBON FOOTPRINT

The question was asked if we should we have a group to research and advise the parish on how we can become more aware and respond to this issue.

A link to a CAFOD initiative is available.

There was a general discussion about the initiative including solar panels and their upfront cost. Some parishioners have experience of installing these but the early financial incentives are no longer available.

It was agreed that a group should be set up of interested individuals. These will be recruited via the newsletter/verbal notices.

What ways are there of putting pressure on political bodies to fulfill their commitments?

DB to write something for the newsletter.

Any Other Business

FrM is to ask the parent teacher association to find a representative from the school to join the PPC.

Should we advertise our Christmas Masses in the Henley Standard? Conscious of not wanting to push numbers up to high at the moment but something to be considered in the future.

Future meetings

Tuesday 11th January, 7pm

FrM closed the meeting with a prayer.