

Minutes of St Michael's Parish Council Meeting held on 11th October 2011

1. Present:

Godwin Pullicino (Chair), Anne Bulfin, Tom Farrell, Lee Gibson (Adult Formation), Amy James (Pastoral), Maggie Laurence, Maureen Meek, Mgr Jim Overton.

Apologies:

Les Cordery (Finance), Siobhan Edgar.

2. Minutes of last meeting (10th May 2011) agreed and signed.

3. Matters arising from meeting on 10th May 2011

GP worked through the list of actions stemming from last Parish Council meeting to get an update on progress as follows:

- Suggestion to have CCTV in the church, linked to the presbytery security system, and a TV screen in Narthex. A company coming in to see Mgr Jim this week to discuss options available.
- Church heating. Report received from heating company this week
Action: Finance Committee to discuss report at meeting on Friday, 14th October.
- Transport to church. This is an on-going problem. Only a very small number of parishioners are willing to commit to bringing parishioners to Mass.
Action: Mgr Jim to make a direct appeal at 11.30am Sunday Mass; and to make a wider appeal at all Masses and in the newsletter. DONE
- A Conversation with Caritas. LG advertised the event in the newsletter but no response. She went on her own and found it informative.
- Christmas Bazaar. This is going ahead on Saturday, 3rd December. The Fundraising Committee has held a meeting to start planning. Mgr Jim asked that we support them.
ACTION: ALL – Who would like to be a point of contact to FRC?
- Treasures of the Cathedral. LG said this was a successful trip and she has organised another one since, to the Treasures of Heaven at the British Museum which was also a success.
- Quiz Night. AB did advertise it in the school newsletter.
- Bible Study Group. LG ran the course for 6 weeks and it was a success.
- Confirmation Catechists. Our catechists have met up with the Catechists from Staines. Their meetings with the young people who have been confirmed are going well.
- Alpha Course. This has been put on hold for the time being – there are several other groups going on in the parish at the moment.

4. East to West Charity– Ian Smith

GP invited East to West to present to the Parish Council to explore possibility of working closer with the charity over the next couple of years as a 'Parish Project'. Ian showed a presentation highlighting the work of East to West in our local area. The charity is based in Egham, established in 1997, working to bring hope to young people in the area. There are real issues of hardship in North West Surrey even though some members of the Parish Council have the perception that this is not a poverty/hardship area. The charity work with young people to show them that there is a way out of the troubled lives they may find themselves in. A Family Link Worker works in three schools in our immediate local area (Thomas Knyvett, Matthew Arnold and Magna Carta); a Police Community Youth Pastor works with young people in Windsor, Eton, Datchet and Dedworth, supporting them and helping them. There is a team of charity workers based in the schools, who work with the children and offer them support. Sometimes a young person in need may find an East to West charity worker more approachable than a teacher.

How can St Michael's as a parish support East to West?

- *Financially* - the charity is funded by local Christian churches and individuals. They do not seek the support of the Borough Council, as it comes with too many restrictions. St Michael's holds an annual Bucket Collection for East to West and Ian Smith thanked us for this support.
- *Parishioners to consider becoming 'Supported Hosts'*- where a young person in need would come to live with a family.
- *Volunteers* - anyone with a skill which would benefit the young people could offer their help – e.g. by teaching their skill to a class in one of the schools mentioned.

After Ian Smith had left the meeting, the Parish Council discussed the way to take this forward. How can we help people in need in our community/local area? While the parish supports and applauds the work of the East to West Charity and is keen to support them by way of the Bucket Collection and advertising in parish publication, TF suggested prioritising Catholic charities over others. LG seconded this by suggesting the St Vincent De Paul Society and presented the Chair with a copy of the Statute Book of the SVP.

LG suggested that the St Vincent De Paul Society is an international Christian voluntary organisation dedicated to tackling poverty and disadvantage by providing direct practical assistance to anyone in need. However, they are not well represented in the Diocese.

Action 1: LG: to look at www.svp.org.uk.

Action 2: LG to investigate.

The Chair expressed his view that the Parish Council should work closely with East to West in view of the fact that it is local, already established, and already has parish connections through a representative (Anne Shenton, and the Chair attending a presentation by the Charity last July). There is some urgency for the Parish Council to make a decision as this is now pending for 10 months.

Mgr Jim said that Archbishop Nichols is asking for parishes to evangelise, both within our own communities as well as by getting involved where there is a need in the community. As a parish, we need to identify what we would be keen to get involved in.

5. Updates

Pastoral update (AJ)

- The Pastoral Committee has not met since the last Parish Council meeting.
- First Holy Communion –a team of catechists is in place for next year.
- Sunday Friends. Rob Andrews and Maria Gaiger are the new directors and they have made a successful plea for new helpers.
- New Translations of the Mass. Meetings have been held for the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion and the Readers to discuss the changes to take effect.

Finance update

- LC not present. No update forwarded.
Action: GP to contact LC for update.

School update (AB)

- New term has started well. Had a very successful Mass at school. Mgr Jim was impressed that children knew the new texts and the new chants. There will be a one Mass in church every half term for KS2 children.
- School was very oversubscribed last year. AB thanked Mgr Jim for his support in the Appeals process. Unfortunately the appeals were not successful. It is school form signing time again – Mgr Jim has 3 form signing sessions at St Michael's School.
- RE Advisor. A new advisor has been appointed by the diocese. He works to support the schools in our local area.
- Vacancy for an ICT Technician. Post will be advertised in the parish newsletter, but AB keen to hear from anyone who may be suitable for the job.
- Visit from Bishop Alan Hopes. The Bishop will visit the school on 21st November 2011 to bless the new buildings and to celebrate Mass.

Parish update (JO)

- The New Translations of the Mass have been well received. Concern was raised as to what will happen once we no longer have the weekly missalettes. Mgr Jim said that we will have new Parish Mass books.
- Several changes to the practices of the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion and the Readers have been put in place.
- Altar Servers. We do need more servers. The school has identified several children who may wish to become Altar Servers.
Action: Mgr Jim to liaise with Heather Nolan.
- Pastoral Visitation. Bishop Alan Hopes was very pleased with all aspects of the parish. He was made to feel very welcome. He suggested that the celebration of the 11.30am Mass should be 'enhanced' to make it more solemn. His visit was a great source of encouragement and support for Mgr Jim.

6. Alpha for Catholics. As per agenda item number three, this has been put on hold for the time being – there are several other groups going on in the parish at the moment.

7. St Michael's News

GP has had a request for articles from Julian Game.

Action: ALL - encouraged to write and ask others to contribute.

8. Fundraising Committee

The Fundraising Committee work very hard to run the Antique Fairs, Ashford on the Map and the Christmas Bazaar. They would appreciate greater support from the Parish Council.

Action: GP to discuss with Frank Collins ways in which the Parish Council could better support them.

9. Peace Legacy for 2012 Games

It was suggested that we look on the Diocesan website for more information and to see how the parish could become involved.

Action: Mgr Jim to investigate and circulate any relevant information.

10. New Missal

The new Missal should arrive by the end of October and will be put in to use from the First Sunday of Advent. It contains all the Eucharistic Prayers and Prefaces.

Mgr Jim is already using parts of it in the Mass. Sunday and weekday Missals should be available from CTS by January.

Action: Mgr Jim to advertise the new Missals in newsletter when available.

11. St Michael's Feast Day.

This was celebrated at all Masses on the weekend of 1 / 2 October. Mgr Jim was a little disappointed by the low numbers of parishioners who came through to the Hall afterwards. Some thought needs to be put in to how we should celebrate the Feast next year. Maybe include the school children and / or have some sort of exhibition on St Michael in the Hall? The Feast next year falls on a Saturday.

We have started to recite the St Michael's Prayer before Mass on Sundays.

12. Day of Recollection at St Cuthman's, Coolham

This is to be held on Saturday, 26th November. Mgr Jim will lead the Day consisting of a talk, prayer, Mass and lunch. 15 parishioners have signed up so far.

13. Film Nights

Could we hold a film night in the parish hall on a regular basis? All thought it was a good idea. It could cater for children as well as adults.

Action 1: AB to speak to ICT member of staff at St Michael's School re equipment required.

Action 2: LG to instigate, once equipment purchased.

14. AOB

- The trellis outside the parish hall is unsightly. Can this be removed now that there is no need to provide a smoking area for the club?
Action: Mgr Jim to discuss at Finance Committee meeting, taking into consideration any legal requirements to provide a smoking shelter.

15. Next meeting - Friday, 25th November 2011 at 8.00pm.