

Minutes of St Michael's Parish Council Meeting held on 1st March 2011

Present: Mgr Jim Overton, Godwin Pullicino (Chair), Anne Bulfin, Les Cordery, Siobhan Edgar, Tom Farrell, Lee Gibson, Amy James, Maggie Laurence, Maureen Meek.
Apologies: Emanuel Gouveia
Welcome: Lee Gibson, who has responsibilities for adult catechesis in the parish, was welcomed as a new member.

1. Minutes of last meeting (6th December 2010) agreed and signed.

2. **Matters arising from meeting on 6th December 2010.** GP worked through the list of actions stemming from last Parish Council meeting to get an update on progress as follows:

1. **Noise level at 9.30 Mass.** AJ was hoping to call a meeting for all Catechists to discuss this but this has not taken place yet. We have a commitment to go back to the parents with our considerations. All financial options have been considered but deemed not feasible. **Action on-going: JO to speak to AP.**
Suggestion to have a TV screen in Narthex – usually up to 6 families in Narthex. **Action Point: LC to discuss at next Finance Committee meeting.**
2. **Church heating.** Finance Committee is considering a different supplier. **Action Point: LC to finalise.**
3. **Toilets.** The flush system is not suitable as it often breaks down. **Action Point: system to be repaired.**
4. **London 2012.** **Action: JO will discuss 'More Than Gold' at next Deanery meeting and report back to next PC meeting.**
5. **Homeless.** TF spoke to Salvation Army re what services they provide for the homeless. It appears that, at present, this is not an issue in our area. The Salvation Army provide a Christmas Day meal service and a toy scheme, where people are asked to donate new unused toys.

What can we do as a parish for needy / homeless people? It was suggested that we identify an established project and look into areas where we may offer help, financially or otherwise; and also to ascertain whether anyone is in need of assistance within our parish (people who have lost their jobs or are going through hard times, etc.). It was acknowledged that people are often reluctant to come forward and ask for help.

A major concern is that help agencies / charities are in danger of losing funding or being cut altogether. SE spoke of a scheme in another parish, where parishioners are asked to donate unwanted household goods which are then passed on to needy families. **Action: SE to find out from Surrey County Council where cuts are being made so that we may identify those to whom assistance might be offered - e.g. Rent Start.**

3. Pastoral update. (AJ)

Pastoral Committee has not met since last Parish Council meeting.

First Holy Communion: the Sacrament of Reconciliation was held on 18th February and went very well. A full update will be given at next meeting.

4. Finance update. (LC)

- LC made reference to End of Year Financial Statement and hoped everyone had looked at it. Projects for this year are: to replace the statue of Our Lady in the front garden and to maintain the maintenance agreements. No major projects are planned. Because of the difficult economic times the project to resurface/renew the car park is on hold.
- The parish has a healthy bank balance which it is desirable to retain in order to meet any unforeseen expense.
- Last year the offertories decreased by £2,500/3,000. Nonetheless, the Social Club debt has now been cleared. Future hall income will be profit for the parish, although there will be an increase in wear and tear charges due to the increased usage of the hall.
- With a view to relieving the pressure on our already generous parishioners, the Finance Committee has decided that the second collections which the Diocese requires us to take should be divided between narthex retiring collections (i.e. Priest Training Fund, Sick and Retired Priests, CAFOD, etc.) and donation box collections (i.e. Catholic Education, Communications, etc.) at the back of the church.
- The financial statement shows an increase in utilities, largely due to the parish now pays the hall bills which in the past were paid by the Social Club. There has also been an increase in rates.

5. School update. (AB)

- Three teachers have recently returned from Tanzania. The school in Tanzania had suffered some explosion damage to three buildings that were being used as accommodation. AB asked whether this could be an opportunity for the parish to support the Tanzanian school as had been discussed at a previous Parish Council Meeting. At the moment, the Mission Fund supports two children's charities in Africa but perhaps some of its income might be directed towards this project? **Action: JO to discuss at Finance meeting; AB to discuss at school and suggest ways for St Michael's School and the parish to raise money for the project, e.g. a raffle.**
- **Applications for admission.** A very high number of applications have been received for entry in September 2011
- **Grandparents club.** It has been identified that there is a large number of grandparents who are responsible for bringing/taking children to/from school. St Michael's School is looking for ways to set up a club for grandparents and others who have children in their charge. School to get a coordinator to manage this Club.

6. Parish update. (JO)

- The new Translation of the Mass will start in September 2011. The Diocese has provided publications for distribution to parishioners. JO has been speaking at Masses about the changes which are to take place and has received positive feedback.
- The new Eucharistic Prayers and Prefaces will come into effect in Advent 2011.
- Hymns / Music will need replacing as we will be required to sing the official texts. The music for these is still being written.
- Teas and Coffees / Sunday Friends during half-term. It was felt that both these activities should run every weekend, apart from during the school summer holidays. The number of volunteers on the coffee rota is quite small. AB suggested running Recruitment Drive at school. All money raised from teas and coffees goes to the Mission Fund. **Action: JO to talk to Adrian Pavia re Sunday Friends and Margaret Friend re teas and coffees. AB to recruit more people from School**

7. Young adults / YAYA (EG)

No update as EG was not present at meeting.

8. Bible Study Group (LG)

- LG reported that this had gone very well since September 2010. She has run 15 sessions so far. The group discusses the three readings for the following Sunday.
- LG is in the process of writing a course entitled 'Do you trust God?' which will go through the fourteen narrative books of the Bible over a 6-week period.
- It was suggested that some feedback comments in the newsletter might be interesting and helpful to other parishioners.

9. AOB

- **Transport to Mass.**

There are a number of parishioners who require transport to church, but only one person is offering the service. Can we identify these and see whether transport could be offered to them? **Action: JO to speak to Gavin Boyle.**

- **Retired parishioners / young parishioners.**

What can we do to offer some facilities/activities for these two groups within our parish?

Action: MM to produce a questionnaire to distribute via the newsletter, asking parishioners what they would like to see going on in the parish. It needs to be quite specific, but also should target various age groups.

- **Women's World Day of Prayer.**

SE did not receive any response to her recent article in the newsletter. This day is traditionally held on the First Friday of March at 10.00am. This year it is being trialled at 2.00pm at the Salvation Army. It is hoped that if the event were to be held at St Michael's next year, it could be held in the early evening to generate more interest.

Next meeting is on Tuesday, 10th May at 8.00pm