

Mary, Mother of God Parish Pastoral Council Meeting

Thursday 17 December 2020 at 7pm

Virtual meeting via Zoom

1. Father Peter led opening prayers

2. Present: Joe Deegan (Chair) Agnes Tetteh (Vice) Father Paul Grogan, Bernadette Benyon, Julia Mason. Christian Oldcorn, Ben Lavin, Moira Page, Father Peter Morkah

3. Apologies: Sandra Scully, Eve Wright, Michelle Vink.

4. Matters arising

5. JD asked if Judith Cummins had visited our primary school. She had visited and her visit coincided with a book distribution initiative. Books were given to the First Communicants and needy families.

6. Father Paul gave an update on Finances. Despite lockdown restrictions and the obvious impact on Parish Finances we are currently still covering costs. Accounts had been kindly prepared by Alan Duerden for an eight month period to November. These had been posted on the parish web site.

7. Faith Formation / Spirituality

8. Fr P/ JM reported on the successful communion programme. Discussion took place on the subject of how to maintain ongoing links with the parents / guardians of the first communicants. It was agreed that Fr P / JM would write to parents / guardians asking what could the parish could do to keep them engaged moving forwards.

9. An Advent Sycamore programme had been well received.

10. In January we will be liaising with Divine Renovation who will be assisting us in our programme of Parish renewal. (A link has been established via our use of the Sycamore series) This will involve support and training with a view to increasing engagement with our adult parishioners and those wanting to learn about our faith.

11. BL talked to his report (see separate paper) outlining the various initiatives which had been rolled out in our two primary schools. The comprehensive list included the sacramental programme. It was hoped that there could be more school masses when the rules allow. Linkages between the schools and the wider parish to be promoted.

12. Fr P advised that 2 adults had been received into the church last weekend and 3 more adults were on a journey towards becoming Catholics. This was very encouraging.

13 A number of contributors had written a short faith testimony as to what their faith meant to them and how it had encouraged them to volunteer. It was hoped that more would “break the silence” and bear testament to their faith to encourage others.

14. A street evangelisation exercise had taken place in Wibsey High Street with candles and prayer cards being handed out to shoppers together with details of our Christmas services.

15 Mass numbers were rising and to assist with social distancing additional masses had been provided.

16 It was again noted that the Parish were striving to provide a comprehensive programme of Mass, sacramental and adult formation opportunities in these very difficult times. JD expressed his thanks to those who facilitated the programmes on behalf of our parishioners.

17. AT raised a point about the prospects of having a Parish retreat. This had been curtailed due to the Lockdown. Fr P and AT to revisit

18 CO talked to his report about the spiritual life of the school at St Bedes and St Josephs with a comprehensive list of initiatives aided by the various house Chaplains. Focus during Advent had been on charitable works including donations to the Franciscan Friars , Catholic Care and the Gianna Project. CO welcomed any questions about the work in the school. Consideration to be given to encouraging links to the parents / guardians of our pupils.

19 Social Life of the Parish

20 It was agreed that it was very difficult to maintain the normal social life of parish during lockdown

21 Consideration and forward thinking to be given to possible events after lockdown. A simple “Parish Social” would be a good opportunity to get together again when rules allow

22 Events welcoming our wider community also to be considered . eg Parish BBQ, Summer Fayre etc

23 A quiz night had been held via Zoom. Thanks to Noel Kenningham.

24 All to consider how Social life could be developed taking into account restrictions

25 Interventions Social Outreach / Charitable works

26 All our Parish groups were trying to carry on their valuable work wherever possible but again this was being frustrated by the restrictions. Despite the restrictions our Parish was engaged in many charitable works and initiatives. It is difficult to record here all the various works being carried out by our Parish Groups only those discussed are noted below:-

27 Hot meals and impressive Christmas Hampers had been prepared by Catholic care (MV)

28 Good links were continuing with Sandale Trust with a Community Market and coat distribution visits to our primary schools.

29 Gianna project were looking for sealed goods eg nappies where possible

30 A further £2500.00 grant had been given for the food programme. The food parcel initiative had been a great success—many thanks to Mary Jo and to all those who had helped with shopping and deliveries etc

31. Telephoning isolated parishioners had been welcomed by many. It was felt that a new call be made to those parishioners who still wanted to help in this way

32 Individual parishioners were still of course taking care of isolated relatives etc as necessary

33 The delivery of the bulletin , homily and Wednesday word was of comfort to many. Again a renewed request for parishioners to help with this work to be made by Father Paul.

34 Ben said that the school children were writing letters and making cards for the housebound.

35. MP said that bereavement packs were being made at BRI.

36 Any other business

37 JD thanked everybody for their valued input and their hard work throughout the year. He wished all those present a holy Christmas time.

38 Date of next Meeting

39 Thursday 25 March 2020 at 7 pm