

**St. Alban's Parish Pastoral Council
Minutes of meeting held 12th November 2009**

Present: Fr. Gerry; Martin Brown; Lorraine Collins; Sandra Endsor; Angela Fairbrother;
Maria Neads; Sean Reid; Walter Stone;

Apologies: Mark Booton; Maggie Holmes; Anne Kearney; Susan Lewis; Jim Parlato;

Opening Prayer: Led by Lorraine

Minutes of last meeting

Proposed as a true copy by: Maria

Seconded by: Lorraine

Matters arising –

All those present agreed that the opportunity to listen to Sally talk about her work for CAFOD, the Confirmation programme and young people of our parish was very worthwhile and that it would be a good idea to bring other members of the parish in to our meetings to talk about different aspects of parish life.

– **To be discussed at a later date**

Christmas Services

Our Advent masses this year will also focus on the Advent wreath and candles (Peace, hope love and joy)

Mass will be as follows, **St. Alban's:-**

- 24th Dec – 4pm Family Mass
- 24th Dec - 6.30pm Youth Mass
- 25th Dec – 10am Christmas Morning Mass
- 26th Dec – 6.30pm Vigil Mass
- 27th Dec – 10am Sunday Mass

Oakwood 25th Dec – 8.30am Christmas Dawn Mass
27th Dec – 8.30am Sunday Mass

Maria will be planning the Family mass together with the other Children's Liturgy Leaders and will meet next week with Fr. Gerry to start the process.

The **Reconciliation service** will be on Monday 21st December (7.30pm).

The **Carol service** on 6th December (3pm) for the elderly of the parish

There will be a planning meeting for the **CAFOD Advent service** on Wednesday 18th November in the parish centre. (11th December 7pm and to be attended by Bishop Malcolm)

Oakwood

Sandra reported that Susan's Wednesday evening Eucharistic services have recommenced and are still attended by a few loyal regulars and the occasional guest.

The Joint evening services also continue on the first Wednesday of the month the next one being December 2nd which will be lead by Fr. Gerry

The Reverend Lindsay Hughes led an ecumenical Service of remembrance on 11th November for all those, in the parish, who have died during the last year.

The Harvest quiz was a great success raising £340 for Water Aid

Planning will shortly be underway for **Alison Adam's visit on 5th December**; the **Carol service on 20th December** and the **Christian Unity service on January 20th**

CAFOD update

The CAFOD meeting with Marie Malloy was attended by 15 people, who learned that the total contributions from St. Albans over the last five years was equivalent to £18 per head of those attending church, this despite there being about 100 less members.

It was agreed that more needed to be done to raise the profile of CAFOD rather than just collecting money. To develop a spiritual richness by campaigning, focusing on different parts of the world and responding as a parish.

In order to do this there needs to be a group set up to take over the planning instead of leaving it all to Sally and Fr. Gerry

Parish Plan Review

Interfaith / Ecumenism –

Interfaith activities have moved away from parish based organising to more co-operation with the Forum of Faiths for Derby and the Multifaith Centre at Derby University.

At present there is a six week course centred on Buddhism, Sikhism and Hinduism and how each faith tackles different issues of the day.

The Multifaith centre has a new director – Dr. Phil Henry who is keen to get the younger generation involved in interfaith activities and has organised a gathering centred on voluntary work to take place at the MFC on December 9th. Both Jim Parlato at St. Albans and Rev Jo Whitehead at Oakwood have said they would be interested in pursuing this.

Fr. Gerry and Sandra will attending a one day conference entitled “Building a Society for the Future – Bridges and Bonds in the East Midlands” This is part of a National Inter Faith Week and will conclude in Derby on 21st November with a Family event on Arboretum Park showcasing the Faiths of the World

Ecumenism is still alive in Oakwood, the Partnership Group still meets regularly although the bulk of both congregations do not show a great deal of interest.

St. Alban's is not really engaged with the concept of ecumenism, the ‘Walk of Witness’ being the only event that happens on a regular basis. In the past we have made contact, via Oakwood Church, with the members of St. Philip's and the Mayfield Road Methodists by inviting them to our Christian Unity Service – this was much appreciated and they were keen to be included in anything else we might do (this, as yet, has not been followed up.) Fr. Gerry added that Fr. Jonathan Paige will be leaving St. Philip's and there will be a 9 month inter-regnum and also the Methodist minister at Mayfield Road has more responsibility further afield so communication might be a little difficult.

The **Deanery Ecumenical Group** has organised a gathering for all parish reps and those interested in working with other Christian communities in our area on **Tuesday December 1st** with Fr. Ken O'Riordan and Monica Purdue (Secretary for the Diocesan Ecumenical Commission) To discuss the rules of engagement with other denominations and the best practices of those already heavily involved.

Spirituality

Following the 'Knowing God Better' series the group devised a new bi-weekly series of meetings based on the evaluation sheets handed in at the end of that first event. Each member of the group would lead an evening, with the freedom to do what they wanted. So far there have been four sessions- Guided prayer, Meditation and two on 'Praying God's word- With two more to come – Spiritual Healing and an Advent reflection.

There are plans for a possible series of meetings to be held between Christmas and Easter.

A.O.B

Youth / confirmation

Written report from Jim – The youth group is well into its current programme which is posted on the web-site. There are two new young people who are helping out – Chris Hope and Edward Parlato. Joanne Orrell will be putting a note in the bulletin in the next couple of weeks to try and get new members.

Confirmation 2010 – there are 15 young people interested in learning more about confirmation and coming to the sessions. The programme will start on 15th January (dates also posted on the web-site) and there are plans to run sessions on alternate Wednesdays.

Maria attended a meeting held on November 11th with potential leaders for the confirmation programme, as she is keen to get involved in this. The plans so far are for the young people to attend Mass at St. Alban's on the first Sunday in the month and Oakwood on the third Sunday – to see and be seen by the rest of the parish and to get involved in parish life.

There will be training sessions at St. Mary's for those wishing to be catechists. These will be lead by Angela Gillespie.

Sally and Jim are looking to take the group away somewhere where they have to fend for themselves and consequently get to know each other better – as yet nowhere has been booked.

Day Chapel

Walter reported that the ceiling tiles have been replaced so hopefully the day chapel will be warmer. The replacement of the tiles was found to be a cheaper option than taking the olds down and cleaning them.

Finance

Steve Endsor submitted a report on the status of current parish giving:

164 boxes of envelopes allocated

102 of which are gift aided (62%)

9 new boxes taken, 7 of which ticked #gift aid

6 new gift aid forms so far received

25 people contribute by standing order, 24 of which are gift aided

25 boxes of envelopes still not taken from church – these will be reviewed at the end of November.

Chris Hurt and Fr. Gerry have discussed meeting with the Diocesan Finance committee to ask for the current rate of 6% on the loan to be reduced in line with outside institutions. It is felt that the rate is much too high given that the bank rate is standing at 1%.

200 Club

Lorraine had been asked to raise the question of disparity in the value of the second and third prizes against that of the first. It was agreed that when the numbers in the 200 club reach the 200 mark (Currently there are 149 members) then we will be in a position to increase the second and third prizes- reducing the first prize was not felt to be a wise move at the moment.

Fr. Gerry agreed to hold a meeting of the club committee to discuss a recruitment campaign.

Altar Servers

Questions have been asked about the lack of altar servers, the council discussed the best way to encourage young people to come forward. In order to make the role special there needs to be someone to train the youngsters properly, to lead them and encourage them to take a pride in what they are doing. There needs to be a large pool of servers so that those who would like to be a part of it, but are too self-conscious, do not stand out from the crowd (some of the boys previously serving have been ridiculed by their peers and consequently have resigned)

This needs more discussion and will be added to the next agenda.

Land opposite church

The land opposite church is advertised for sale by auction. There is outline permission for four houses on the site. This will exacerbate the parking problems on Roe Farm Lane, which apparently cannot be legally restricted – during the week both sides of the road are used by people visiting the Revive centre and the situation will get worse when the dentist practice opens.

As a 'good neighbourly' gesture Fr.Gerry has approached the Revive centre with an offer of them using the church car park at a charge of £1 per car/per day.

This offer will have to be discussed in detail and provision made for those using the parish centre on a daily basis and need parking spaces, and also for days when there are funerals or weddings etc.

Fr. Gerry will report back when he has more detail.

Fr. Gerry has attended a thanksgiving mass for Helen Booton who has retired due to ill health, he commented that the parish and the music group in particular will miss her, but we wish her well in her forthcoming treatment.

The closing prayer was lead by Sean.

Next meeting: Thursday 14th January 2010

7.30pm in the parish centre.

Walter to lead the opening prayer