

MINUTES OF PARISH FORUM HELD WEDNESDAY 9th NOVEMBER 2011

Present: Mgr. Corcoran, P. Hardwick, J. Clegg, C. Astin, B. Collinson, M. Manning, M. Valovin, E. Davies, M. Procter, P. Holgate, J. Brown, A. Brown, J. Woodend, E. Thomson, P. White, S. White, D. Marsden, C. Riley, P. Sutcliffe, A. Harkin, A. Evans, M. Mercer, K. Shepherd, S. Webb, A. Taylor, C Muldoon

Apologies: L Collinson, C Carr, M Bradley, L Marsden

1. **Prayers were led by Margaret Donnelly**

2. **Minutes of the Last Meeting**

The Minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting.

3. **Matters arising**

Retreat Day in Preston for Eucharistic Ministers

Twenty people had booked to attend the retreat day on the 19th of November in Preston (twelve from Clitheroe and eight from Sabden). The Parish had paid for the attendees.

4. **Election of Chairman & Secretary**

The Chairman confirmed that anyone could be proposed if they were present at the meeting or had given their permission to be nominated if they were absent.

Nominations for Chair

Peter White was nominated by P Sutcliffe and seconded by Margaret Donnelly. There were no other nominations and Peter was elected by a unanimous vote.

Nominations for Secretary

There were two possible candidates proposed, but both were unable to serve due to other diary commitments. Margaret Donnelly was nominated by Father John and elected unanimously. Ann Harkin would provide "cover" if and when required.

5. **Proposed Youth Day and Mass**

The Group were hoping to organise an event on the 18th February in St Michael and St John's Parish or School Hall (to be confirmed when availability had been checked). The Youth Diocesan Organiser had been involved in the initial meetings and this would be a Deanery event. It was envisaged that this would be a Day of Prayer from 9.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m., culminating with Mass at 3.00 p.m. Father John Flynn, Chaplain to Salford University and the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal will lead the event and it was hoped that there would be a high turnout from across the Deanery.

The Group were appealing for help with the event, particularly from those who already held CRB clearance to work with young people. Please look out for a poster on the event which would give more details of the event itself and the help required.

6. Mission Group Reports

Home Mission

Three meetings had been held and Bible Reading Group had been created. The Group was still quite small so additional attendees and new ideas would be very welcome. The next meeting would be held on 12th January 2012 and Etienne Charpentier was the point of contact.

The Group had also requested Father John's assistance and advice on organising a Parish Retreat in Lent. As the children would be making their First Confession during this time, it would seem to be a fitting culmination for Parishioners to join them in the Sacrament. It was recognised that finding a leader for the event could prove to be difficult so it was suggested:

1. Investigate the use of an internally organised event following a Programme using DVDs. However it was felt that people would prefer a more "personal" approach.
2. The Zion community offered a course organised by laity.

Action: M Donnelly to investigate.

Mass Attendance (See attached report.)

The meeting agreed that:

- It was important to remind everyone that Sabden offers a "late" Sunday morning Mass at 11am.
- Whilst the children would love to play or sing at Mass, parents are not always available to accompany them.
- During a recent Deanery meeting it was noted that several Parishes had reported successes when they introduced a Children's Liturgy. It would be useful to confirm with Seedlings/Little Church parents if:
 - New ideas could be explored with Little Church.
 - Would it be appealing to children/parents to have a Children's Liturgy and/or a Children's Choir/Musicians? **Action:** M Donnelly

7. Church Bell

The initial information had been in the Parish Newsletter and it has been described as "most remarkable find". There are very few bells in England which are 500 years+ and the Jesuits have been asked for any information which they may have on its provenance. The expert who works for Taylors, the leading bell foundry company in England, has inspected the bell and pronounced it to be "excellent". He has estimated that it weighs one half tonne and has given three proposals:

1. Remove the roof from the building, lift the bell out using a crane and then transport it to the factory in Loughborough so that it can be skimmed which would improve the tone. Not only was this option likely to be prohibitively expensive, but Taylors prefer to retain the original and distinctive sound of "early" English bells.

2. Apply electronic apparatus to control a hammer to strike the bell (as opposed to swinging the bell) to sound Mass and the Angelus. It could also be set to "toll" for funerals, a function which could be controlled remotely from inside the Church.
3. Install new beam, renovate and rehang the bell.

As both of the latter options could be completed for £4,000 it agreed that these options should be pursued.

8. **Glass Altar**

It was proposed that a glass altar would allow the original altar to be seen without obstruction and as it was intended to be when the Church was built. This would not only be a permanent solution but also avoid the costs/inconvenience of strengthening the support under Sanctuary to take the additional weight of a more traditional stone option. One voice of dissent was noted as to these plans and past alterations.

The carpet would also be removed to reveal the tiles and the highest cost is likely to be cleaning the marble wall surrounds. It was also suggested that it might be useful to investigate what might be available from Churches which are closing. Fr John ruled this out because altars are designed for each particular church and we would still have the problem of strengthening the floor.

Action: JPC to report when price/feasibility is confirmed.

9. **Ecumenical Events**

Joy to the World

Stuart Kellington is organising a concert and is looking for people to assist with bible and secular readings and dramas with Christmas theme. Posters should be available in the next few weeks.

Advent Lunches

These will be held in the URC. Mary Sellers will speak as representative of the parish at one of these events.

A Short, Secret History of Santa

This event will be at St Mary's C of E at 5.00 p.m. on 2nd December (Friday) followed by short Nativity walk in the Castle Ground and back to the crib by 6.00 p.m. to watch the Round Table Charity Christmas Dash. Children were encouraged to come dressed as shepherds/angels and donations of mince pies and other festive food would be very welcome.

10. **Christmas Tree Festival**

This would be held in the URC on 16th and 17th December and will be hosted by Trinity Church in 2012. The team are hoping to have single tree for Our Lady of the Valley Parish. The theme will be a Snow Tree as the snowflake symbolises individuality where each and every one is unique but when gathered together as one in love and peace, joy and happiness shine through. Parishioners are asked to donate snowflake decorations in white, cream, silver or gold and should be brought to Church.

Church Decoration for Christmas

Greenery is required for the decoration of the Church at the beginning of December, e.g. evergreen plant material, holly, ivy etc. This can be brought to the Church from the beginning of December.

11. Christmas Card Distribution

More cards are needed this year for the two Parishes and they will be produced by printers. A distribution list is needed for Sabden and volunteers are needed to distribute them.

12. Advent and Mass Booklets

Several different options are available and any preferences should be given (examples were available at the meeting).

13. St Michael and St John's School

St Michael and St John's School will attend the opening of the Civic Crib on 28th November and will lead the singing. The Carol Service will be held at 6.30 p.m. on Thursday 15th of December.

14. Any Other Business

Vote of Thanks

The new Chairman proposed a vote of thanks to Peter for his great contribution as Chairman over the past years.

15. Arrangements for Next Meeting

The next Meeting will be in Clitheroe at 7.30 p.m. on Wednesday 15th February.¹

¹ Agenda items are always welcome but please ensure that they are sent to the secretary before the meeting.