

## St. Mary's Catholic Church, Wednesbury.

### Parish in Council

Friday 19 January 2018, 7:30pm, in the Hall

1. **Opening prayer**

2. **Apologies** - Paul Piddock

3. **Setting the vision** - Father reflected that parents are keen to have their children baptised and he encourages them to bring them to him as early as possible, preferably at about 6 months old. Any children that are of school age should be referred by the school.

If there are children who have Catholic parents, but not in St. Mary's school they do need to approach Father to discuss baptism.

Father is encouraging children from school to attend Mass and Children's Liturgy (CL).

Father said that he wanted to thank Teresa for her work with CL and would like to get new parents and children to attend. Teresa has already done work with a Polish boy attending a non-catholic school, who now attends CL.

Father talked about Ecumenism - growing closer to and understanding non-catholic communities; and he attended the induction of the new vicar of St. Barts' last week (Mark Danks).

He said that he felt there was a good spirit in the congregation and we seem to work together very well. The atmosphere and devotion is good in church. The choir do a great job and he is learning music with them.

There will be a special sung Mass for Candlemass. If anyone is interested in joining the choir, please let him know.

Mr Agg asked about the church organ. Father said that he was looking for an organist, but there aren't many available. Cate M suggested that we could ask if there was a music student at Stuart Bathurst, who may be able to help us. **It was agreed that Stuart Bathurst would be asked if there was a student who may be able to help.** Gary L asked if we were able to pay the organist.

4. **Notes from the last meeting and matters arising**

Pat M asked about evening Mass and the possibility of changing the time. Father stated that Saturday Mass in winter discourages people to attend and he had been looking at what times other churches have Mass. There was a discussion about the pros and cons of particular times of Mass.

Father had asked the Saturday congregation about this, but had had no responses. **Father agreed to keep Saturday evening Mass at its current time of 6pm.**

**Ramp** - Paul P is looking at options for a ramp and has secured £2,000 as a grant from Churches Together. He hopes to find a suitable ramp within

this funding. Margaret asked about the pots on the church steps; one of them is an obstruction to people with any mobility issues getting up the steps safely. **It was agreed to move the pot to a safe location.**

**Club-** The Dilapidation Claim is not settled yet and is with the managing agents for the Diocese. Father is waiting to meet with the heating engineer to ensure that the club is in good order over the winter.

The Diocese has asked us to review our assets:

- The presbytery;
- The hall; and
- The old school.

The costs for the Feasibility Study have been covered by grants, so far and we have been awarded a grant of £10,000 from the Poor Parishes Fund; which will pay for the next phase of the Feasibility Study.

Some options for the buildings are:

- The old school is demolished or refurbished as our parish hall;
- The hall is demolished;
- A new presbytery built.

There is an identified parcel of land that stretches from the hall site up to the presbytery, which could be used for housing, with the potential to reclaim the land behind, currently leased to the local authority.

Mr. Agg asked about the hall licence (from last notes). It was noted that this is an entertainment licence that was not renewed due to the condition of the hall. Any use is generally restricted to parishioners, or parish events, with any alcohol brought in by individuals (not sold).

Tracey W asked if there would still be a car park and Father said, yes, that would be factored into any designs for the land. We do need to ensure security and that fencing is in place, especially for the new presbytery.

Gary L asked if any funds raised could be used to help support the school, as the mobile classroom has been condemned by DfE and needs replacing.

**Father said that he would do this.**

Questions were posed about how many houses may be built, how much parking, whether the previous issue from English Heritage about artefacts on the hall site would hamper any development. The issue with English Heritage is no longer valid, so would not prevent the development.

**It was agreed to ask the firm of architects (APEC) to attend the next Parish in Council meeting, so that they can update us and we can pose any questions to them directly.**

5. **The Quinquennial Inspection** - is a 5 yearly survey to ensure that buildings are kept in good repair. The last one, done in 2011 and updated in 2016, has been circulated to a few people and is available now for

anyone to read. Key actions identified as needing attention are prioritised as urgent, medium and long-term. There are a number of actions that we must take that were identified. They are: work to the north side of church (confessional and sacristy) to peeling paintwork, due to damp; all gutters need to be cleaned to help the flow of water; the tower is full of guano (pigeon poo) and has to be cleared before the architects can inspect the tower. We potentially need to spend up to £250,000, once the next report is done and is due in the autumn. There is a department in the Diocese that can assist with funding, but we do need to fundraise to provide some match funding.

Father wants to restore the font to its original location, in the baptistery, but needs to get permission from the Historic Churches Commission.

Margaret mentioned asbestos in the hall; an issue that had been raised previously and whether an asbestos survey was required. **Father agreed to follow this up with Paul P.**

Gary L asked whether we should be allowing the Madina School to use the hall, considering the matters raised at the meeting. Father said that he needs to speak to the school to establish how much longer they need to use the hall, as it was expected that it would be a short term let.

6. **Fundraising** - the Pot Luck Supper was cancelled in December, due to snow. There are a number of events that we can consider:
- A quiz night, possibly with a fish and chip supper. We need to agree a date with Jonathan;
  - A summer fayre - date to be agreed, with a jumble sale afterwards;
  - The Sovereign Band wants to offer a rehearsal event. It was agreed that it would be Friday 2 March;
  - A cake sale - agreed as 11 Feb (in the porch);
  - A film night - this will take place in school, date to be agreed;
  - A pancake night and Pot Luck Supper on Tuesday 13 Feb;
  - An Irish Night on Saturday 24 March.

Father will notify the Madina school of any dates that we need the hall.

7. **Other matters arising** - Mike M said how nice the Christmas Masses were and how well the children participated.

Father informed the meeting that Ria Moran has become a CL helper.

8. **Date of next meeting is Tuesday 24 April at 7pm, in the hall.**

9. **Closing prayer**