

Our Lady of Lourdes Pastoral Parish Council

9th September 2019 –Our Lady of Lourdes Pastoral Centre

Membership: President: Father Patrick Sammon; Chair: Fiona Christison; Vice-Chair: Frank Adesegha; Secretary: Lisa Affleck; Members: Elizabeth Marks, Cathy Francis, Philippe Freund, Jonathan Blakesley, Ann Marie Fox, Augusta Joseph, Jane Smith [Social Committee Rep]

Opening Prayer.

- 1. Apologies for absence:** Apologies received from Father Pat, Elizabeth Marks, Philippe Freund and Jane Smith.

Prior to the meeting, Elizabeth advised the Chair that is no longer be able to be a member of the committee due to expecting a baby in October – The Chair thanked Liz for her contribution and wished her well!

Bernie Dando attended the meeting to present the Health & Safety report.

Pat Pugh and Chris Driscoll attended the meeting for Item 3.

- 2. Minutes of last meeting & matters arising:** Minutes of the last meeting were approved. Action points discussed as follows:

- Bernie hasn't had a chance to look into buggy awning due to the redecoration of Parish Centre. She confirmed all rooms have been successfully decorated with new carpets. A new projector has been installed in main hall.
- As Father Pat was absent, he will give an update at the next meeting on new RCIA volunteers and cashless giving.

- 3. CAFOD Report:** Pat Pugh and Chris Driscoll attended the meeting and the following was discussed:
Connect2 Ethiopia

- This project ran nationally for 3 years, and has now come to an end. OLOL parish alone raised £70k, which was the largest amount raised out of all parishes in England and Wales.
- Part of the regular fundraising and raising awareness in the parish is via 2 fast days per year. The upcoming autumn fast day will help fund a water project in Uganda, with a solar powered well due to be installed in October.

The last fast day raised £5k, which was split between Connect2 and the appeal caused by Cyclone Idai.

Hands On Columbia

- The proposed new project is a community one in Magdalena Medeo in Columbia. It has a human rights focus, which differs from the previous projects with a focus on land/farming. The project would focus mainly on groups of women and young people, to empower them to have a voice and to advocate for poorer people in the country. This would be achieved through trained local organisations, for example via workshops.
- Chris explained that there are more people internally displaced in Columbia than in Syria and that the country suffers from a huge amount of violence and human rights abuses.
- The project would run for 3 years and would have measurable outcomes – regular updates would be provided; the aim of the project is to reach out to 5,000 people.
- CAFOD will fund 20% of the project; the rest will be mainly funded by the EU, who will work with Caritas. CAFOD aims to raise £167k over 3 years.

- The PPC expressed concerns over the fact that this is a less tangible project than the previous Ethiopia one – e.g. workshops and work within communities can be harder to evidence and quantify than the provision of physical aid such as a well or water pump. Chris assured that appropriate checks and measures were in place by CAFOD, and that the EU would also have their own monitoring in place. He passed information leaflets to the Chair for further review.
- All present were in favour of adopting the project. Fiona to discuss/confirm with Father Pat.

Climate Change initiative

- A new initiative has just been launched – Creation Celebration – in response to Pope Francis' words: "We need a conversation which includes everyone, since the environmental challenge we are undergoing, and its human roots, concern and affect us all." (*Laudato Si'* #14). To organise a Creation Celebration, the first step would be to organise a Creation Mass in September or October, which 'gives special thanks for the gift of creation and to pray for our common home'. All agreed that a Creation Mass could be organised in the parish, ideally at the 9.30 Sunday Mass, and the provisional date of 13th October was suggested. Material could be provided for the Children's Liturgy at the Mass; Chris could be present to run some activities at tea & coffee after Mass; Augusta agreed to speak at the Mass; bidding prayers could link into the theme; appropriate items could be brought up with the offertory. It would be advertised in the newsletter in advance. Chris/Pat will email further information to Lisa. Fiona to discuss/confirm with Father Pat.
- CAFOD are committed to ongoing campaigns related to Fairtrade and Climate Change. A few years ago, the *livesimply* initiative was launched - an opportunity for Catholic communities to respond to Pope Francis' invitation in *Laudato Si'* to "work with generosity and tenderness in protecting this world which God has entrusted to us". 50 parishes in the UK have achieved the *livesimply* award, with 100 more working towards it. It was agreed that OLOL parish could look into being involved. To be discussed after the possible Creation Mass.

Chris extended a warm thank you to the parish for its support and generosity to CAFOD.

Fiona thanked Pat and Chris for such an informed update.

4. Social Committee update: In Jane's absence, she sent the following update:

- June's car boot sale was successful; aim is to organise 2 boot sales per year.
- There will be a cake sale on 22nd September.
- Abba evening at cricket club on 18th October. All PPC members were encouraged to attend and promote the event to parishioners.
- More people needed to have Martin's Estate Agent boards to promote Abba evening & Autumn Fayre – each board raises £10.
- Coins still being collected and clothes collection to be arranged.

5. Health & Safety Report: Bernie reported as follows:

- Hall decoration as discussed above (Item 2).
- The Diocese inspection system has changed and 3 companies are now responsible, instead of just 1. The fire inspection is outstanding; water heaters need to be left on rather than switched off when not in use; any new electrical device needs to be authorised before use.
- Fire Officer training due 16th November. New fire warden volunteers required.
- First Aid training required and to be organised – Lisa asked for Youth Club committee to be included in the training.
- 2 defibrillators will be installed within the church. 14 people have been trained to use these, but the devices can be used by non-trained people as they are equipped with voice prompts, which give instructions when in use.

6. Youth Club update: Lisa reported that she is on a new youth club committee chaired by Suzi Harnett, with a total of 5 members. The first youth club of this academic year will take place on 13th September. An end of year party took place in July, when year 6's were welcomed, with a view to joining in September – it was very well attended and enjoyed.

7. Sacramental Programmes update:

- Michaela Mouquet has recently been appointed as Catechist Co-ordinator.
- Augusta advised that 31 young people have expressed interest in the confirmation programme this year, mainly from Trinity & Ursuline.

8. Update on Parish partnerships: Anne-Marie and Fiona attended a meeting recently. St Thomas's and St Anne Line would like to approach the partnership plans slowly. They are particularly interested in collaborating on youth projects, so a meeting has been scheduled to discuss this further on 3rd October. Father Dominic will give an overview of the youth projects taking place across all 3 parishes.

St Thomas's also informed the other 2 parishes of its Landings programme, designed for returning Catholics.

9. Syria project: Fiona, Frank and Anne-Marie attended a recent meeting at Christchurch, with the view to Christchurch leading an ecumenical project to fund a Syrian couple or family to move to Wanstead for 2 years. Discussion as follows:

- The community sponsored programme is part of a wider government initiative to bring 20,000 refugees from Syria to the UK by 2020. The individuals have been selected by the Home Office, and already have refugee status. The project, led by Christchurch under the Church of England umbrella, would require a committee to be formed, and any interested OLOL parishioners would be welcome to join.
- The Christchurch project leaders advised that it would take 6-18 months to organise, before any individuals could be welcomed to Wanstead – the paperwork is notoriously challenging to complete, and £9,000 initial funding would need to be raised. A 2-bedroom property would be made available through the Church of England. The individuals would live in the property for a total of 2 years.
- This programme has been successfully taken on by a parish in Dagenham, though most projects have taken place in the north of England due to lower property prices.
- PPC members expressed concern about what would happen after the 2 year housing period came to an end. Fiona responded that the Christchurch representatives expected that the refugees would have obtained work in that time period and would relocate elsewhere – assistance would be provided with this, though it might mean that any children would have to move schools.
- Jonathan expressed an interest in joining the committee, and it was also agreed to publish the information in an upcoming newsletter to invite any other parishioners to join.
- All agreed with joining the project in principle. Update, with Father Pat's input at next PPC meeting.

10. Future events organised by PPC: The following events were discussed:

- Disco for primary age children – All PPC members agreed to assist with the organisation of this event. It had previously been planned as a Christmas disco, but it was decided that the lead up to Christmas is a busy time for children and families, so after Christmas would be better. The date of Saturday 1st February was agreed upon – in the main parish hall for 2 hours in the afternoon. The hall could accommodate 35 children plus a parent/carer to accompany each child (i.e. total 70 people). Target age = primary school children.

Fiona to speak to Father Pat about funding, and to liaise with PPC members by whatsapp.

- It was agreed that an international Mass with an international themed event in the hall afterwards would be a good idea for the Parish, which is fortunate to have parishioners from many different cultures. All agreed that in the short-term, the disco would be a more straight forward event to organise, but that this idea could be explored further in the future.

11. Any Other Business:

- Lisa suggested a future discussion on environmental awareness and sustainability within the parish and the parish led groups (e.g. energy use, review of single use plastics, fairtrade products etc). This could link in with the CAFOD Creation Celebration & *livesimply* campaigns (see Item 3). To be discussed at next meeting.
- Bernie suggested that the parish centre lighting could be fitted with sensors – she will investigate the feasibility.
- Lisa referred to the note in the latest newsletter about a possible winter homeless shelter at Christchurch. She will attend the meeting on 22nd September and report back at the next PPC meeting.
- Augusta advised that she had recently met a Priest from Poland, who was keen to visit the UK with 10 young adults from his parish in Warsaw. They would organise their own travel and accommodation but would appreciate being welcomed by a local parish. Augusta wondered whether OLOL could be involved. To be discussed at next meeting.

12. Date of Next Parish Council Meetings:

- Tuesday 10th December, 8pm in the Pastoral Centre.

13. Closing Prayer.

Summary of Actions

Action	Name
Consider an awning for buggies as an alternative to buggy huts	Bernie
RCIA programme – new team of volunteers required	Father Pat
Cashless giving system – update on how it is implemented at Brentwood	Father Pat
Hands On Columbia CAFOD project TBC	Fiona/Father Pat
Creation Celebration Mass, proposed date 13 th Oct 9.30am Fiona to discuss with Father Pat & confirm Chris/Pat to email info to Lisa	Fiona/Father Pat/Lisa
First Aid training to be organised	Bernie
Syria refugee project – publish details of how to join committee in newsletter Discuss further at next meeting	Fiona
Organisation of disco for Primary school children, proposed date Sat 1 st Feb afternoon. Funding TBC with Father Pat Fiona to liaise with PPC via whatsapp	Fiona/All PPC members
Environment & sustainability within Parish/CAFOD /livesimply award	Lisa/To be discussed at next meeting
Investigate whether parish centre lighting could be fitted with sensors, to make energy usage more efficient	Bernie
Winter homeless shelter at Christchurch	Lisa to update at next meeting
Welcoming of young adults from Warsaw Parish	Augusta to give further details at next meeting