

MINUTES OF THE PARISH ASSEMBLY 10TH SEPTEMBER 2013

Present: Members of the PPC: Fr. James, Melanie Hollinshead [Chair], Deacon Duncan, Dorothy Whitehouse, Mary Morgan, Davnet Barker, Maggie Keeling, Paul Ives, and Debbie Harrison [Secretary]. Guests included Richard Steggle (Finance), Margaret Lechley (Parish Secretary), Arnold Verrall (Church Hall), Junior Vianna (who kindly provides the wine for the event) and parents Brenda and Helen, with very enthusiastic children William and Findlay.

Apologies: Noel Holland

1. **Opening and closing prayer:** Fr. James
2. **Welcome and agenda:** Melanie Hollinshead [Chair] introduced the evening's theme which was to consider various reports and also initiatives to encourage greater participation in Parish activities.
3. **Items for attention:** Report on the Youth Club (MK); support for the food bank via St. Johns
4. **Finance:** Richard Steggle said that we have a modest surplus, but that additional expenses and maintenance work on the Church would eliminate this by the end of 2013. The Church has managed to increase charitable funding from 7.5% to 12.5% - this is mainly to UK charities, but also to international disaster response charities, including CAFOD. Richard emphasised the importance of Gift Aid as a way to increase funding without additional donations.
5. **Encouraging participation in Parish events:** We discussed:
 - a. The need to find ways to enthuse parents during First Holy Communion preparation
 - b. Carol concert at Christmas, including post-service event in Hall
 - c. Children's events, including cricket on the green, development of games evenings in Hall, outings such as bowling (which the Parish could fund – Deacon Duncan pointed to the funding of the Walsingham House trip for Confirmandi)
 - d. Maggie Keeling suggested greater involvement in the Peace & Justice Group; possibly sending children to South Africa, for example
 - e. Maggie also suggested offering coffee and breakfast after weekend Mass
 - f. In addition Maggie suggested that it would be helpful to consider combining committees
 - g. Mary Morgan suggested using the Hall for coffee mornings (where people could bring cakes to serve and to sell), and mentioned the success of the Strawberry Fairs of past years and the use of the Presbytery garden for Pilgrims.
 - h. Arnold Verrall suggested promoting our ACAT Group (Actions by Christians Against Torture), for example encouraging parishioners to write letters (postage could be funded by the Parish) and send emails. The profile of our involvement could be encouraged via schools.
 - i. Junior Vianna suggested that weekday Mass attendance could be improved if there was one evening Mass per week for those who need to leave early in the morning for work. There was also a suggestion that the morning Mass could start at, say, 9.15am to allow mums to drop off their children at school and then come to Mass. The discussion concluded that the day of the week would need to be regular.
 - j. The Christmas Bazaar needs additional support and is a fun occasion

Next PPC Meeting: 11 December 2013 at the Presbytery with food! All welcome!