

Present:

Fr. Peter Mansfield, Gerry O'Donnell, Sue Carr, Brenda Eydman, Bernadette Hallett, Bridget Hanlon, Peter McFall, Erica Thurbon, Colin Wilding,

Guests:

Antonette Cabida, Richard Thurbon, (Peter Chamberlain unable to attend).

Minutes:

Bernadette Hallett

Agenda:

1. **Welcome** by Gerry to our first in-person PPC meeting since pre-covid. **Opening Prayer** by Brenda.
2. **Apologies for Absence** - Roque Fernandes, Penne Hutton, Pauline D'Mello-Maplesden, Elsie Ofili,
3. **Minutes and Matters Arising** - no matters arising. Minutes accepted and passed.
4. **The Synodal Process in the Archdiocese of Southwark**

Gerry welcomed our Delegates for the Parish Synod process, Richard Thurbon and Antonette Cabida, and gave apologies from Peter Chamberlain who was unable to attend as he is away. This was the opportunity for the Delegates to report back on the meetings, and to give an update on our current position.

Antonette reported that they had held three listening sessions on the themes of i) Communion, ii) Participation iii) Mission. Attendance numbers were 36, 23, and 19 respectively, with mixed attendance of people attending either one, two or three sessions, so there was a steady representation. We are ahead of schedule as the timescale has now been extended. The Delegates will now have time to have a follow-up meeting. They are awaiting final feedback from different sources but have a broad outline. They have gathered threads from the main points of the three sessions; there was some overlap and some strong sentiments expressed, with many opinions and suggestions for the future or way forward, and action points. They may come up with further communication as there is now more time.

Richard added that they are still considering the other groups and communications, and some Zoom meetings feedback.

The Delegates were asked how they had found the experience. They felt it went well due to the honest views expressed by those who participated. There were some themes which ran through all three meetings; there were some very deep rooted issues and people were willing to either share or discuss experiences. There was some strong passion expressed, and recognition that some other people also felt the same way. The school community will also be giving some feedback, and some other groups, eg. Confirmation group. We need feedback from younger members.

The question was asked 'How will the Bishops and Archbishops select from all the feedback that they will receive, the points and issues to take forward for their own discussions?'
Answer: They will pick up on the main points to be taken forward.

There have been requests from the Parish asking if we will be able to see or access the submission to the Bishops as we will be very interested to see what goes forward.

Gerry thanked the Delegates for their skills in facilitating the discussions which were very well managed, and everyone who wanted to was able to make a contribution or express their thoughts or ideas. The documents which were sent through gave guidelines as to how to manage the structure of the meetings and it worked well. There was much open feedback in a fact based way. It was felt that Pope Francis had come up with an excellent idea in involving the laity to come together to express their own views and concerns.

Gerry asked if the Delegates needed anything or any support from the PPC, and queried whether any groups had been omitted. There have been a few requests for a Zoom meeting from people unable or unwilling to attend the meetings in person. The Delegates need to know these numbers asap due to their tight timescale. The report has not been drawn up yet so the Delegates are still open to feedback.

* Gerry offered to email all group leaders again to ask them if there is any further feedback they or their group members would like to contribute.

Regarding feedback to the parish, the Delegates need to meet and plan ahead to January and they will address how to give a short update to the parish.

Gerry stated that this is not just a report, or feedback to the Bishops, but is a way for us as a Parish to reflect on what we can do here and now. How can we create ways to take things forward? It can be seen as a 'Call to Action' within the parish, and an opportunity of a time of growth for us.

Gerry said that the whole parish Synod process had been very well organised and communication to the parish had been excellent. He was pleased with the attendance and thought numbers were good. The meetings were facilitated extremely well. He gave a heartfelt vote of thanks to the Delegates on behalf of the PPC and the Parish for all their time, commitment, and hard work in taking on this responsibility and carrying it through so well and skillfully.

5. Review of Current Arrangements for Masses

Fr. Peter said that we are currently in a difficult phase. The vaccine news is good but Covid numbers are high again. Many things are still not back in place yet. When could singing restart? Currently, congregations are permitted to sing with masks on. Is this the right time to introduce this in St. Aidan's or should we wait until New Year? At the 11.00am mass the choir do now sing but they are in the front row only. People are still sitting spread out on the whole in the church although sometimes people are sitting immediately behind someone else, especially if they have arrived late and do not want to draw attention to themselves so want to sit near the back. Could we put a notice on the door or in the newsletter to say which masses are having singing subject to wearing masks?

Pre Covid, mass attendances were around 420 people, and in the mass count in October the average attendance was 250 over all 3 masses. Music decisions are made for each mass. Our current policy is that we have not taken up the permission given by the Diocese to sing at mass. Recorded music which has been used at masses has been greatly appreciated.

The consensus of feeling was that people could sing at mass but must wear their masks, although two people were still unsure about this idea.

The 11.00am mass would need to use hymn sheet handouts of music.

We are happy to go along with what the Diocese permits and the final decision will lie with Fr. Peter and the Music leaders. If things change then Fr. Peter will liaise with Gerry and the PPC. There will be a notice put into the newsletter, with the option there will still be one mass with no singing.

* Fr. Peter will make an announcement from the pulpit about singing but still wearing masks at masses, until such time as circumstances could change.

Cleaning; currently only the handrails are now being cleaned after each weekend mass, but there is no requirement to clean seats. Sanitiser is still being used. After discussion it was agreed that cleaning will now only take place after the 9.00am mass as there is so little time between the end

of that mass and the beginning of the 11.00am. We will discontinue cleaning after the 6.00pm and 11.00am masses. This was agreed subject to review, and subject to changes in Covid regulations, and will start next weekend.

6. Arrangements for Christmas Masses

The Parish Council members reviewed the possible options as discussed at the previous meeting. The first option of limited numbers on a 'first come first seated' basis was discarded.

The booking system used last year worked very well but was a lot of work for Leonie to manage! We discussed the safe capacity of the church and it was felt that a nominal figure of 100 (to be confirmed) seats could be allocated, and the masses should be stewarded, Regulations are more relaxed now but for Christmas masses it will be made clear that reservations are made subject to stewards' guidance in the church.

A seating plan (not named places) will be needed, but will try to allow for family groups to sit together and spread numbers safely around the spaces available. This will be a more relaxed approach than last year but will still limit numbers and address health and safety of all.

There are no Diocesan or Government rules at the moment, so therefore there is less goodwill or co-operation in the same way now.

Decisions:

- We will have organised capacity. This was agreed generally within the PPC group.
- There will be a steward-led seating plan.
- There will need to be clear instructions for stewards.

7. Review of Finances

Peter McFall had emailed out the Finance review prior to the meeting. He distributed current balance sheets and explained details. There is a surplus at present due to income from rental from the hall being used as an NHS vaccination centre.

Gerry gave a vote of thanks to Peter McFall for the report, and for all his efforts and actions. In particular, Standing Orders for Offertory contributions have helped to stabilise the Offertory contributions, and the hall revenue has been very good. The Parish is still solvent.

8. Communication to the Parish

There will be an update about the findings of the Synod meetings when they are ready.

There will be an announcement about singing at masses while wearing masks.

Cleaning of benches to be discontinued apart from after the 9.00am mass.

Christmas plans regarding booking seats for Christmas masses will be made in due course.

9. Priest's Notices

No additional notices.

10. AOB

A huge thank you was given to Fr. Peter for allowing Valley Pharmacy to use the hall as a vaccination hub. This is Christian outreach to the community in practice.

Fr. Peter thanked all the Covid hub volunteer stewards and asked Sue to please pass on our thanks and appreciation.

The Synod outreach to the community has also been excellent.

Volunteer to prepare Opening Prayer - Roque Fernandes,

Closing Prayer by Fr. Peter

Date of Next Meeting:

Date: Thursday 3rd February 2022

Time: 7.30pm

Place: St. Aidan's Church Hall