

## **Notes of the Parish Assembly meeting held on 24-09-2017 at St. Mary Magdalen church hall.**

The meeting was chaired by Declan Moore who explained that the intention of the meeting was to "listen" rather than to "decide". Topics raised during discussions would be noted, taken away for review and consideration and, if appropriate, actioned at a point in time in the future.

Points raised from the Assembly were:

- Desire to strengthen and improve the choir. Additional members to be encouraged. The choir is an informal collective of individuals who enjoy singing and wish to add to the liturgy through music in worship. The choir rehearses monthly on a Wednesday evenings preceding the service at which they will sing. Fr Mathew was asked to announce the date and time of rehearsals in the newsletter.
- Desire to start a children's liturgy group. Two persons initially expressed interest in helping with this – training and safeguarding checks will need to be carried out. More volunteers will be required. Fr Mathew said he would like to hold a special children's Mass on Christmas Eve at 18:00, but stressed that for any parents attending this would be in addition to and not instead of the normal Christmas Masses. Need to involve children more in services generally in the future.
- Fr. Mathew was asked how long he will be at St Mary Magdalens. Declan Moore pointed out this was not a question that can be answered as it was in the remit of the Bishop and not the parish priest.
- Fr. Mathew happy to put notices in the newsletter – these are best sent to him by email by Thursday of each week to be in the Sunday newsletter.
- A suggestion was made that we start Exposition and Benediction on Saturday mornings after 9:30 Mass. This was generally felt to be a good idea Fr Mathew to consider when this can best be accommodated within the weekly schedule. It was suggested that some form of education (article in the newsletter?) may be desirable regarding exactly what Benediction is to enable younger persons in the parish to appreciate and understand.
- Carol service will be held at Christmas involving the St Pancras school children. No details yet available.
- Martin Pakes gave a short presentation on catechesis and outreach. A number of children from the Deanery are engaged in the Confirmation programme, with meetings circulating between the parishes. The actual confirmation will also circulate each year between the parishes.
- It is hoped to start a Bible Study Group – Martin is keen to start this with Fr Mathew's support. Minimum of 6 persons will need to be involved.
- Parish web site has been updated and is now maintained regularly. This resource can be further expanded with additional data – items for publication can be provided to Michael Long or submitted via the web site contact form. Content has to come from the parish not from the people supporting the web site technically.
- Desire to do more within the parish by way of encouraging social meeting. Suggestions were made regarding anointing of the sick and Mass, parish BBQ, Passover meal.

- Suggested that we re-start a Parish Council as a way of involving parishioners more in the parish and actively support the parish priest in his ministry.
- A request was made to revert to a screened confessional in a more traditional style, perhaps offering a choice between face to face and anonymous Confession.
- Suggestion was made that we could start regularly praying the Rosary - after Friday Mass was suggested as a possible time for this.
- Fr Mathew explained that he was starting a “building fund” in place of the property maintenance fund that existed previously. This would have a wider scope than simply maintaining what we have and would allow other new development projects to be funded. One such project would be replacement lighting for the church – the current installation is old, expensive to run and extremely dangerous to maintain.
- Propose to refurbish the gallery in church following the disposal of the old organ. This could involve changes to seating, new carpet etc.
- Need to look at fund raising events for specific projects (e.g. new lighting) and generally.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> collection. Could gift aid envelopes be used?
- More volunteers rather than same people.
- Possibility of renovating the hall kitchen was raised. There may be a community grant available to help fund this – to be investigated. Also may be able to use the resources from the Hollesley Bay community to help.
- Parish finance matters to be published and made available in the newsletter.
- A further meeting will be held to review progress made on items raised and plan further future steps. This is likely to be in the first quarter of the next year – February/March timeframe.