

## ST JOHN FISHER RC CHURCH, NORTH HARROW

### ANNUAL PARISH MEETING – 28 NOVEMBER 2016

Held in the Parish Hall, 19:30 hrs

**Present:** 22 parishioners and Parish Council members attended the meeting

#### 1 Opening Prayer & Welcome

The meeting opened at 19:30 with a prayer led by Fr Shaun

#### 2 Introduction

The Chairman, Neil Cocking, welcomed those present.

#### 3 Parish Council Report

Neil Cocking presented his Parish Council report.

The new Parish Council constitution is in operation with fewer members than in the past; most with a special interest in one area of parish life. Neil's area of responsibility is music & liturgy.

##### 3a Music & Liturgy

A music audit was carried out at all masses one weekend and the findings included:

- Most of those attending 10 & 11.30 masses were content with the balance of organ/ other instruments and the sung mass with hymns.
- About 70% of those responding at Saturday evening mass would like music of some sort. However, further research is needed to find out whether some people attend because it is a quiet mass. Any changes will be introduced slowly.

A successful start has been made on introducing more St John Fisher pupils into the music group at the monthly 10am Sunday mass organised with the school.

##### 3b Premises

Part of the hall requires re-wiring & the work is being planned.

#### 4 Finance Report

Mike Parkinson presented the Financial Report for the year.

#### **Parish Finances year ended 31st December 2015**

##### **Income Key Points:** -

- **Total income £259,559 (down from £297,392 in 2014)**
- NB (1) 2014 figures include donations for Sanctuary etc.
- NB (2) neither figure includes funds loaned from Diocese
- Offertories £134,376 (down from £137,524 in 2014)
- Plus gift aid partial tax reclaim of £3,661 (£17,346 in 2014)

##### **Outgoings Key Points:-**

- "Ordinary" expenditure £180,510 (up from £167,014 in 2014)

- £31,208 loan capital repaid plus £3,399 interest
- Largest outgoing - Diocesan Assessment £51,325 (up from £36,580 in 2014)
- Utilities £11,242 (down from £12,009 in 2014)

### **Current Position**

#### **Money in the Bank/Diocesan loan:-**

- Cash balance on 18 November just over £166,660
- Diocesan loan: £298,989 outstanding on 18 November

#### **Outlook for 2016 and Beyond:-**

- Diocesan loan - repayment of £4,458pcm commenced in June 2015
- Repayments partly funded by Growing in Faith
- Goal of maintaining £100k in the bank exceeded
- Offertories slightly down again compared to 2015

#### **Fund Raising**

- **Gift Aid £25k**
- **International Day £5,160**

John Billiet asked whether it is possible to query the Diocesan Assessment which was considerably higher in 2015 than 2014. Mike Parkinson replied that it is not possible to query the assessment but the criteria for the calculation are publicised.

## **7 Catechist Report**

Kay O'Connor presented the following table of participants in programmes:

	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
*Baptism Preparation Families	18	13	14	26	18
Confirmation Candidates	46	46	47	61	48
First Communion/Reconciliation	55	57	46	54	65
Rcia Adults	6	8	3	4	2
Saturday Religious Education	12	10	19	31	36
#Marriage preparation					1 couple

\*Families only attend baptism preparation for first babies. There were approximately 50 children baptised in the parish in 2016. #Marriage preparation is no longer carried out in the parish.

Neville Ransley is the Parish Council member with responsibility for education and catechesis. He and Kay O'Connor (Parish Catechist) have reviewed the Confirmation programme (presentation attached).

## **8 Parish Priest Report – Fr Shaun Middleton**

- The numbers attending mass show a decline from approximately 1,000 per weekend in 2011 to 900 now. Demographic issues may be significant with high house prices reducing the number of owner occupied houses and the move of people out of the area to more affordable parts of the country.
- Theology on Tap (a monthly informal adult education session led by Peter Keenan) has had two sessions for adults and both were well attended. The talks are on the website and the programme continues until June 2017.
- The Parish has an excellent relationship with St John Fisher School. Diocesan schools are planning to become a chain of academies in order to protect their Catholic identity.
- The Year of Mercy & the Love in Action programme: a report & action plan has been produced (attached) & is available on the website and in the Christmas 2016 edition of The Pylon.
- The parish is reducing the amount of printing and paper used. This will reduce costs and be more environmentally friendly. Mailchimp is being used to distribute The Pylon and the weekly newsletter by email from December. Some paper copies will be made available for those unable to access email.
- Fr Shaun thanked parishioners who helped to tidy the car park & cut back bushes last weekend.

## **9 Points raised by parishioners**

**9a Churches Together in North Harrow wish to change the month of their annual report to fit in with the end of the financial year – i.e. from July to April in future. The Constitution of CTiNH required the sanction of each of the member churches. This proposal was approved by the meeting.**

9b Concerns were raised about poor levels of lighting outside the front of the church. Improved lighting will be investigated.

9c John Billiet questioned the cost of becoming a member organisation of Harrow Citizens when other projects could make use of the money. He also raised concerns about the possible left wing nature of the group & about the church engaging in politics. Fr Shaun invited John to attend Harrow Citizens planning meetings. The financial commitment will be for 3 years only and meetings will be open to all.

## **10. Thanks**

Father Shaun thanked John Billiet for his many years of dedication and service to the parish as a member and chairman of the Parish Council. He was given a round of applause.

**12 Closing Prayer:** The meeting closed at 20:40 hrs with a prayer led by Fr Shaun.