

## Parish Gathering – Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2021

### Chaired by Fr Nicholas and Nigel Anstead – Notes by Barbara Kay - 23 parishioners present

Fr Nicholas opened in prayer.

#### Social Committee

- a) Monthly Drop In Centre – next date is Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2022.
- b) Golden Friendship Club has started again. Every Thursday 2 pm - 4 pm. Christmas lunch was held on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> December and was a great success.
- c) Afternoon Vintage Tea. Last Friday each month (except December) – next date Friday 28<sup>th</sup> January.
- d) Christmas Fayre Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> December went very well. The figures will be out next week. Nigel has the prize list.

**First Holy Communion** – Barbara reported all going well. The children liked the Advent booklets provided by the parish. Last lessons 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> December and then a break until 9<sup>th</sup> January. Continuing thanks to Hilary Wrack for her assistance.

**Pope Francis – Synodal Church** – Sr Dympna and Liz Duggan reported back. Not much response had been received to the forms handed out. Liz drew our attention to the website as given on the newsletter. The next step will be that each parishioner on the mailing list will receive an e-mail inviting them to join a discussion group. Sister Dympna invited us to pray for the Synodal Church process – copies of prayers are at the back of church. A Synod newsletter is planned. Barbara was asked to include this topic in the weekly Bidding Prayers.

#### Welcome Pack

Still no comments received.

#### Altar Servers

A large size cassock is on order and is being specially made. Trisha will check with John Duah about which cassocks will be needed for Christmas. Smaller ones going into storage

#### Curtain Behind Altar

Trish reported that the curtain needs to be changed for Christmas, probably on Christmas Eve.

#### Altar Linen

Teresa Williams explained the special way in which washing and ironing the altar linen needs to be done. She reported that she is now the only person doing this job and although she is happy to do it, she would be grateful for volunteers to assist her.

#### Offertory

Before the pandemic, the family who had requested the Mass were invited to bring up the bread and wine. Teresa had been organising this. This had stopped during the pandemic, but Fr Nicholas feels it is the right time to restart this. Sometimes Masses are requested very shortly before the actual day and thus the families miss out on this opportunity. Barbara also needs to know the names by the time the Bidding Prayers are sent to the readers. Teresa will look into this.

#### Collection

It has been noted that the offertory collection remains well down on pre-pandemic levels. Baskets left by the door do not generate as much giving, so Martin Kay and Trisha Baxter will between them create collection bags on poles to try to encourage more giving. It was hoped to have these in use by Christmas.

#### Gaudete Sunday

This falls next Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> December. A rose-coloured chasuble belongs to the church and is available for Fr Nicholas to use, as is a rose-coloured tabernacle cover, which will be changed for the 6 pm Mass on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> December. Bambinelli Sunday also falls this weekend and parishioners are invited to bring their crib figures of Baby Jesus to be blessed at the 10.30 am Mass.

## **CAFOD**

Rachel Kirkham drew our attention to the major famine in East Africa and said that a special appeal was likely. We could consider holding a second collection for this. Barbara will include this intention in the Bidding Prayers.

## **Christmas Masses**

These are listed in this week's newsletter and are as follows:

Christmas Eve

5 pm, 7 pm, 10 pm, 12 midnight (Latin)

Christmas Day

8.30 am (Latin), 10.30 am, 6 pm

Boxing Day

8.45 am for First Holy Communion families (in church as no 8.30 am Latin Mass), 10.30 am, 12.30 pm (Latin)

In order to accommodate all who wish to attend a Christmas Mass, Fr Nicholas has offered to say a 6 pm Mass on Christmas Day, since this is a Saturday when there would normally be a Mass at this time.

Sister Dympna said there would be a list of all the Christmas Masses in the various Bedford churches. In particular she reported that there would be a Mass at Holy Cross at 5.30 pm and at St Philip and St James at 7.30 pm for those unable to get a seat at Christ the King at the 5 pm and 7 pm Masses respectively.

Stewards would be needed at all the Masses. Nigel volunteered to do the 5 pm and 7 pm Masses, and would e-mail round requesting further volunteers.

Trish agreed to liaise with Katherine about the usual service of readings and carols at 9.30 pm on Christmas Eve.

Hymn sheets would need to be printed for all Masses.

## **Cadets of Mary**

Suzy gave a very positive report on the Cadets. The Cadets are praying for parishioners at home as well as growing vegetables. Suzy also explained the involvement with the Cadets of young people doing the Duke of Edinburgh award, which started at the Parish Fayre yesterday, and reminded us of the necessity for all volunteers to be DRB checked.

## **Volunteering and Vaccination**

Further to Liz Duggan's bringing up an email last month setting out suggested vaccination requirements for all volunteers, it should be noted that both the First Holy Communion catechists and those who undertake RCIA have received at least two vaccinations each.

The meeting closed with a prayer and blessing from Fr Nicholas.

**Next meeting** – Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2022