

## Parish Gathering – Sunday 4th September 2022

### Chaired by Nigel Anstead/Chris Brookes

#### Notes by Barbara Kay

#### 32 Parishioners Present

1. Fr Nicholas opened in prayer.

2. A new **Health and Safety Officer**, Tim Squires, has been appointed. Tim introduced himself to the meeting and spoke of his background as a warehouse manager, where he had done Health and Safety training in the past. Rachel proposed that Tim did some up-to-date training and Chris said this would be arranged via a Diocesan mentor system. Tim expressed his willingness to do this.

#### 3. Social Committee

Sue reported that the Drop-In Centre had started on 1st September and this session had been the best ever with 20 clients, 9 organisations represented and our MP in attendance. Four of our church members are currently involved. The next session is on October 6th. Sue will be away on that day; she asked for assistance and Rosemarie offered.

The next Vintage Tea is on 23rd September and Nigel will run this in Myriam's absence.

The Golden Friendship Club has a trip to Cromer End of the Pier Show next Friday 9th September. There is one remaining place.

A Barn Dance is planned for Saturday 1st October from 6 pm. This will include games for the children. The tickets will be on sale from next weekend and will be £5 per adult and £15 per family. Food will be 'bring and share' and the bar will be open.

The annual Macmillan Coffee Morning will take place on Sunday 9th October 9 am – 1 pm. Donations of homemade cakes were invited.

It had been strongly recommended at its MOT that the minibus's windscreen be replaced and this had been carried out. Future bookings for the minibus were encouraged, for example to a Christmas market.

Sue reported that the recent drive for volunteers – church cleaners, counters - had not been very successful and will be repeated shortly.

#### 4. First Holy Communion

28 children are definitely enrolled in this year's Holy Communion programme, with the numbers expected to increase at the enrolment day on 25th September. Classes start on Sunday 2nd October. Mass attendance will be monitored and an attendance card will be used.

#### 5. Confirmation

Enrolment forms are available at the back of church. Candidates must be at least 11 years in order to attend the Diocesan retreat which forms part of the preparation programme. The closing date for enrolment is Sunday 9th October with classes starting on Tuesday 18th October.

#### 6. Cadets of Our Lady

No report.

## **7. Screens in church**

It was suggested that we install a screen or screens to display hymns and YouTubes of spiritual talks etc. There had been liaison with Brian Emmanuel from the Diocese who had said that funds may be available to assist with formation and spirituality, which such screens would come under. Hilary spoke in favour of this based on her experience at St John Rigby School. She believes a package is available which contains all the hymns needed.

Some reservations were expressed by Teresa W and Marguerita about this affecting the nature of the 'sacred space' and distracting attention from the altar. It was felt that this could be addressed by carefully considering the location of the screens.

Chris felt that someone would need to maintain the hymn list and operate the projection if screens are installed.

Fr N commented that he was in favour of such a screen based on his experience in his previous parish but that this was dependant on a suitable location for the screen.

Nigel will fill in the application form for funding.

## **8. Synod Process**

Sister Dympna had provided sheets giving more details in church and also brought a supply to the meeting. She encouraged those present to consider in which areas they would like to get involved and mark it on the sheet. There is a meeting tomorrow and another one at the end of the month to review the results, and feedback will be given at the parish meeting in October.

## **9. Church Notice Boards**

It was felt that someone needs to be identified who can regularly remove outdated posters etc from the notice boards in the porch. Concern was also expressed that personal information was displayed here when it should not be.

## **10. Second Collections**

There will be a collection for the CAFOD Pakistan appeal next weekend (10th/11th September) and one for the SVP appeal on 24th/25th September. In October there is the CAFOD Family Fast Day with collections on 8<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> October, and one for Missio on 22nd/23rd October.

It was noted that Hilary had agreed to take over from Rachel as CAFOD rep. Rachel will offer support.

Teresa L asked for envelopes for Holy Souls Masses to be provided before November. She also asked if the parish was willing to support the schools' Christmas giving tree. This was agreed. This year, instead of the metal tree, the artificial one will be set up on the first Sunday of Advent.

## **11. Church calendar**

The relics of St Bernadette will be at Northampton Cathedral from 10<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> October and a possible parish visit in the minibus was suggested. Teresa W asked about wheelchair access for this. One wheelchair with passenger can be carried.

## **12. Altar Servers and Curtain Behind Altar**

There was a correction to the minutes of the meeting in June: there are no altar servers at the 6 pm Mass on Saturdays and therefore the problem with misplaced vestments is not from that Mass.

Trish reported having recently washed 90% of the cassocks and cottas and will do the rest shortly.

### **13. Safeguarding**

No report.

### **14. Church PA System**

Marguerita reported a delay in the visit from the company to install this. The donation from the Legion of Mary had not been quite enough to cover this expense, but a further £100 had been approved by the Diocese. In view of the delay, it was hoped that the price already quoted would be honoured.

### **15. Church Flowers**

Teresa reflected that flowers as part of God's creation are an aid to worship. She reported that donations had covered the Christmas and Easter flowers, but that the price of flowers had risen considerably, therefore she had invested in more silk flowers which, with fresh greenery, will be the mainstay of the arrangements going forward. Flowers are often requested for weddings and baptisms: the church is unable to finance these, although Teresa is happy to arrange any flowers which are supplied. It was agreed that a second collection be taken for church flowers for Christmas and Easter.

Teresa also commented on the difficulty in finding a free time in which to arrange the flowers. She was referred to the parish diary on the website. She was thanked for the flower arranging she does.

### **16. Church cleaning**

Katherine reported that only two people, herself and Marguerita, were doing any cleaning. They had done a session last weekend which had revealed a lot of dirt and litter such as food crumbs and wrappers. It was reported that the Kerala community clear up after their Masses.

Like Teresa, Katherine commented on the difficulty of finding a free slot to clean the church.

Sue suggested that cleaning be put as a priority on the list of jobs for volunteers and the list will be drawn up in the next week or so. Although the current cleaning is done on a Saturday, this could be done during the week if people would find this more convenient.

Sister Dympna requested that a larger bin be provided in the toilet as it is often overflowing.

### **17. Church Grounds and Gardening, Pollarding by the Kerala Community**

Martin was thanked for his work. Chris reported that Jomex, a member of the Kerala community, and a team would undertake a major trim as agreed with Fr Nicholas and Martin on a recent walk round. A pole saw had been ordered to assist with this and delivery is expected shortly.

The Kerala community would also like to erect low fences round some of the borders and this was agreed. Rachel asked for replacement of the wire perimeter fencing; this will be reviewed at a later date.

### **18. Parish Finances**

Chris reported that collections were going up. Christine reported that increases in utility costs had not hit us yet. Chris informed the meeting that the Diocese was struggling financially, and had had to take tough measures, details of which he would be happy to discuss after the meeting with anyone interested.

### **19. SVP**

Ursula reported that SVP meetings continued to take place via Zoom as some members felt this was still safer. Phone calls and visits are being carried out, and help to families given as needed. John suggested that fresh vegetables could be offered to needy people and Suzy will supply a checklist of what is available in the course of the year.

Sr Dympna has contact with the Wixams Retirement Village, whose Catholic residents remain keen to have a weekday Mass there, and with Southways.

There are some parishioners who are unable to get to Mass. Katherine holds a list of these and she and Fr Nicholas will go through and update this. An item will be put in the church newsletter asking for people who need lifts to make contact with Fr Nicholas.

## **20. Come and See**

This will start again in October with one definite starter for reception into the Church at the Easter Vigil in 2023, and a further enquirer.

## **21. Review Socially Distanced Masses**

It was agreed that the 6 pm Mass should remain socially distanced for now, particularly with the 'flu season coming up in the next few months.

It was recognised that some people would still feel more comfortable wearing a face covering. It was agreed that the announcement in the newsletter should be toned down slightly stating that face coverings are no longer being specifically requested by the church, but people may still wish to wear one.

## **AOB**

Hilary explained that the children would be involved in the Mass singing and reading the Bidding Prayers on the second Sunday of each month, rather than each week as had been suggested in this weekend's newsletter. Practices will start next Sunday 11th September. The children's choir has been promoted at St John Rigby School.

Rachel is happy to run an evening Reading Group if anyone is interested.

Fr Nicholas closed in prayer.

## **Date of next meeting**

Sunday 2nd October after 10.30am Mass.