

Parish Gathering – Sunday 4th December 2022
Chaired by Nigel Anstead, notes by Barbara Kay
26 people present

1. Fr Nicholas opened in prayer.

2. **Social Committee**

- 49 people had attended the Vintage Tea on 25th November, the highest number to date, and £192 had been made.
- The Christmas Fayre took place on Saturday 26th November and had made a profit of £1602.32, slightly down on last year. 79 adults had attended and lots of children.
- The minibus has been booked for two trips in December by St John's House, one to the Stratford-Upon-Avon Christmas Market. A local basketball team had block-booked the minibus on 15 occasions up to next March. On each of these they will supply the fuel and also make a donation towards minibus overheads of £40 each time. This will represent a significant contribution towards covering the running costs of the minibus for the year (about £1000). It was pointed out that for insurance reasons, we do not hire out the minibus, but ask for donations to cover tax, insurance etc.

3. **Bishop's Visit on 17th/18th November**

Bishop David will visit the parish on the weekend of 17th/18th December to mark Fr Nicholas's 15th anniversary of ordination. There will be tea, coffee, mulled wine, mince pies and home-made cakes after the 6 pm Mass, and a bring and share lunch with any leftover wine or cakes after the 11 am Mass. Help with serving refreshments and clearing up was needed at both Masses.

Fr Nicholas explained that as this visit by the Bishop was specifically to celebrate his 15th anniversary, the Bishop would be present at the 6 pm and 11 am Masses only and not those of the Latin Mass or Kerala community. There is no formal collection for Fr N's anniversary as the following weekend is Christmas when all of the collection goes to our priest. Individuals are welcome to mark Fr N's anniversary in their own way.

4. **First Holy Communion**

- Hilary Wrack was compiling a list of Prayer Partners which would be available after Christmas.
- Liz reported that classes were going well and the children were preparing to celebrate First Confession on Thursday 8th December. Mass attendance was good, with the children filling six benches, and the families were getting involved with the parish, e.g. at the Christmas Fayre last weekend.
- Liz expressed her appreciation to the Latin Mass community for giving up the hall on some Sunday mornings so that the Communion class could be held there.
- The time of the classes is to be changed in the New Year in line with the later Mass start time.

5. **Confirmation**

No report.

6. **Cadets of Our Lady**

No report.

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7. **Altar Servers and Altar Curtain**

Trisha had sent a report to say that all was running smoothly with the servers' vestments
The gold Christmas curtain will need to be hung on the afternoon of 23rd December after the 12.00 Mass.

8. **Safeguarding**

No report.

9. **Church and Hall PA System**

The new system had been installed in the church and the old one moved to the hall, the latter free of charge. Thanks were expressed once again to the Legion of Mary for their largely financing this.

10. **Church flowers and extra storage space**

Work on converting part of the confessional is going ahead.

11. Church cleaning

A major clean will need to be done before Christmas. Three extra volunteers have come forward. Date and timing to be agreed.

12. Church Grounds and Gardening

Jomex had started to mulch and chip the tree debris, but the mulching/chipping machine had broken down. There are a large number of branches that need chipping and Barbara agreed to talk to Martin to see if he would look into the costs of hiring a heavy-duty chipper and undertaking the work.

13. Church grounds safety

All the marking has now been done and the paving slabs leading from the car park will be put in position this week. As the cones by the yellow lines are being moved, permanent posts will be placed in this area. The flower bed alongside the presbytery will be bordered by rocks or a small fence to prevent it being driven over.

14. Parish Finances

No report.

15. SVP and Christmas charities

- Ursula reported that the usual Christmas hampers were being put together by All Nations Church in Brickhill, St Thomas More Secondary School and a local firm and will be distributed shortly.
- The Giving Tree had been very successful, with all the labels being taken last weekend. There was scope for more labels to be available on future occasions.
- Sue reported that 20 shoeboxes had been donated for the Samaritan's Purse charity.

16. Come and See

Ursula reported this was going well with two candidates meeting once a fortnight.

17. AOB

- Rachel reported that plans for the Quiz Night/Fish and Chip supper at the end of January were well in hand and that tickets were available. She will be selling them after both the 6 pm and 11 am Masses in the coming weeks and asked for this to be put in the parish newsletter.
- Rachel also drew attention to the monthly Drop-In centre and what it offers to the community.
- Liz commented that the hall tables had been left dirty after a booking on Saturday night and there had been rubbish on the floor. Users will be reminded that they need to leave the hall clean and tidy.

Date of next meeting

Sunday 8th January 2023 after the 11 am Mass.

Fr Nicholas ended the meeting with a prayer.