

## **Minutes of STM Pastoral Council Saturday 19th of March 12.15 to 1.15.+**

1. Apologies for absence: Bernadette;Peter;Dorothy.
2. Parish Priest report: Fr was pleased that mass attendance seems to be recovering to some extent but is not quite back to pre-covid levels. However, some parishioners are still choosing to attend mass in the week rather than Sundays, so a total for the week gives a better idea. Other parishioners are still not going out of their homes and some are still nervous of crowded enclosed places such as the church.
3. There has been an increase in 11.00 a.m. choir numbers and an increase in altar servers for all masses (with about twenty now) An observation was made about the value and role of altar servers in nurturing vocations to the priesthood. A suggestion was made to have a presentation sometime on Church Vocations with perhaps a visiting speaker.
4. Fr held the first whole school mass since the pandemic in STM school. The importance of mass within schools was noted as some do not attend mass in church on a regular basis. Benediction is now held at the end of each school term at STM before the children depart for their holidays.
5. FHC and confirmation groups are running well.
6. The importance of Confession, especially for regular communicants was discussed. There will more time made available for this on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> April with a day of adoration and penance as preparation for Holy Week.
7. Fr. Reynold's public requiem mass was celebrated at last, two years after his passing. It was good to see so many turn up for it, from other parishes too and a fine tribute was given.
8. Children's liturgy group continues. Lenten reflection group is now established and hopefully will continue at other liturgical times of the year.
9. A foundation of the Union of Catholic Mothers just been begun in the parish and the Knights of St. Columba had a recruitment campaign, hosting a coffee morning on 20<sup>th</sup> of March. More Sunday coffee mornings, at least once a month, are encouraged, each one led by a different group and/ or to raise money for charity or for an activity of that group. The next coffee morning will be provided by the Guides on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> May and Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> June.
10. Personnel issues: Lorraine, Parish Sacristan, is doing a lot to help with the daily running of the sacristy, but more help is needed, especially on Sunday mornings or if/ when Fr is not here and there is a visiting priest. Someone is needed for the repository if it is to continue in some way or another. Binu has agreed to cover for Natasha with the music at 9.00am mass while she is on maternity leave. Lawrence, our CAFOD rep is currently not well so some support for him would also be helpful. Obi is a member of the CAFOD group. A new parish safeguarding representative has been appointed. and there has been a useful visit from the diocesan safeguarding team. If any parishioner who does volunteering work or support in the parish but did not renew their DBS on this occasion they need to contact the Diocesan Safeguarding people directly.
11. A discussion on the ongoing issues with maintaining standards in the hall. Action needs to be continued about this and it is hoped that parishioners will set the standard in this for other users and take care and pride in their hall. This means that parishioners and the Social Club do not use any adhesive materials on the paintwork anywhere at all and leave the hall better when they leave it than when they came in.
12. The renovations and redecoration of the porch continues. Action is needed to help clean chairs as the intention of the renovated porch is for it to be used for larger meetings. Holy Water will be available again at the entrances after the Easter Vigil.
13. Fr explained his role in the Council of Priests, a large Council with the Archbishop with representatives from each deanery at which the Archbishop presents an agenda of projects,

issues, concerns etc. in the archdiocese and the church in the world to the priests of his dioceses and they can ask questions as need be.

Actions before next meeting on the 11th June at 12.15

**Fr:** To act on some suggestions made in relation to the maintenance of good standards by those who use the parish hall.

To remind the parishioners about their Easter duty.

**Tejo:** To communicate with contact about the chair cleaning for porch meetings.

To communicate with the Keralan group about hall meetings at STM.

To continue to grow the parish website. To include the development of groups and ways of making contact with the group.

**Obi:** To consider how best the work of CAFOD can continue to be highlighted to the STM community.

To consider leading a small group initiative at STM.

To perhaps suggest a model for The pastoral council including a pastoral council board in the porch and/or pastoral council page on the parish website.

**Patricia:** To complete leading the Lent reflection group including sending photographs to the website.

To write up the minutes of the meeting to be shared with other group members.

To continue to support Fr in the same way as all the other members of the council in his mission for leading a great God centred parish.

CAFOD = Catholic Agency for Overseas Development

STM = St Thomas More Church/ parish/ school

UCM= Union of Catholic Mothers.

DBS= Disclosure and Barring Service.

FHC= First Holy Communion