

Parishioners' Open Meeting

1 December 2020 7.30pm

Stephen Warde (Chair), Fr Simon Blakesley, Deacon Geoff Cook, Sarah Sykes (mins)

Parishioners at the start of meeting:17 at the start of meeting

Correction to the Minutes for the October meeting supplied by Ron Haynes on the subject of QR codes: we could design key fobs that could be scanned rather than that do the scanning.

No Apologies were received. Fr Simon opened the meeting with a prayer and Parish group updates followed.

#### 1. Parish Group updates

SVP UPDATE (Catharine Warren) – There has been a good response from the Parish to the new style Giving Tree for this Christmas. There are still a couple more things that can be bought. SVP members will be around after Sunday Masses to speak to for those who are not online but would like to be involved. They will also be selling cards made by Ginny Russell. Thanks were shared for the responses to the requests for help/equipment recently in the newsletter. They will also be delivering the Christmas edition of Pilgrim to those not attending Mass and not online.

The group would like to restart the fundraising for Sudan/South Sudan that they ran last year due to increased need in the area with refugees fleeing the civil war in Ethiopia and floods in the country. Catharine asked whether there was second collection spot in January that is currently unallocated to other causes. After some discussion it was agreed that the second collection on 24<sup>th</sup> January would be allocated to this new appeal for support. It will be possible to make donations via bank transfer, a contactless payment machine or cash. The SVP's national conference has agreed to let the parish trial a contactless machine for this appeal.

Fundraising ideas welcome, and it was suggested that the Confirmation group might be up for helping out.

Ron Haynes mentioned that the SVP have a supply of DAB radios for those who would like to listen to internet radio such as Catholic radio station, Radio Maria England.

**ACTION:** Parish Office records to note that the monies from the second collection on 24<sup>th</sup> January will be donated to the SVP Sudan/South Sudan appeal (**REECE**)

**ACTION:** Catharine to contact Helena to see if there's any scope for the Confirmation candidates to help raise funds for the Sudan/South Sudan appeal. (**CATHARINE**)

**ACTION:** put a note in the newsletter about the availability of DAB radios (**SVP GROUP**)

JUSTICE & PEACE UPDATE (Ron Haynes) – the group are currently running a series of talks through Advent on Fratelli Tutti via Zoom. There have been 2 sessions so far and there has been a good turnout for these. You can attend any of the talks without having to attend all the talks. Peace Sunday is next month (17<sup>th</sup> January) when the group will be letting the parish know about actions and resources connected to this.

CAFOD UPDATE (Serga Collett, read by the Chair) – a small group of volunteers have made some Christmassy-themed facemask which will be on sale after Mass at 11am this weekend and 9.30am Mass the following weekend. Many thanks to those who helped.

The group will not be selling Christmas cards after Mass in the run up to Christmas this year, and nor will it be running the post-Christmas sale of unwanted gifts. However, the CAFOD Word Gifts catalogue is available online and at the church and there is also an interactive Advent Calendar on the CAFOD website. There is also information in the Christmas edition of *The Pilgrim* about World Gifts.

Jeanette Milbourne is being interviewed on Radio Maria England this Friday and will be speaking about her work for CAFOD.

Fr Simon asked whether there was a money box in the church wall for CAFOD. There is a box situated at the back right corner of the church as you leave, which is currently unused but could be recommissioned.

**ACTION:** look into bringing the in-wall-money-box back into use for ad-hoc donations to CAFOD. A locksmith may be required as the whereabouts of the key is unknown (Parish Office).

## 2. Arrangements for return to Mass

The church has been open for private prayer during lockdown 2, but the first Mass open to the public after lockdown ends will take place on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December at 12.30pm. The same conditions and procedures that were in place before lockdown will continue to be in operation. These will need to continue post-Christmas for the foreseeable future.

Nora Darby and Jo Wager confirmed that stewards have said they are willing to continue in these roles and those who haven't replied are assumed to be onboard still.

Fr Simon confirmed that there will not be a Christmas Eve morning Mass (ie 9.30am) as there will be four evening Masses that day.

Mass times on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> December and Friday 1<sup>st</sup> January: both will take place at 12.30pm.

The Chair expressed thanks on behalf of the Parish for the hard work of all those involved in the safe running of the Mass during this time of pandemic restrictions.

## GENERAL DISCUSSION:

**CHILDREN'S LITURGY:** Leonie Isaacson confirmed that there were sufficient people to help with the return of Children's Liturgy up to Christmas, but afterwards more people are needed to make it a sustainable effort. Leonie reported that Helena is asking whether any of the Confirmation candidates would like to contribute to this important ministry. Steve Warde wondered if going to less frequent occurrences would help if further volunteers weren't forthcoming. However, it was felt that this would not be ideal as it could make it difficult for people to know when it was running and momentum of support from the families may be lost.

Jeanette Milbourne mentioned that it had been difficult to hear one of the leaders at the last session because she was not on a microphone. Leonie thanked her for the feedback and said that there had been problems with the clip-on mic this week. Chris Avery volunteered Martin to check any mic problems.

Fr Simon suggested that the key to getting volunteers is to offer training. The Chair expressed thanks for the team's efforts in getting Children's Liturgy up and running again.

Thanks were also expressed to the parish musicians for the recording of music and for the live music which took place on the final Sunday of lockdown. People felt that this really made a difference to attending Mass via livestream, and the Chair offered thanks to Martin Avery for making it happen. Martin is currently collecting music recordings for the Advent Masses and the virtual Carol Service on 20<sup>th</sup> December.

**STEWARDS:** Jim O'Sullivan said that we should keep up a regular appeal for stewards as we need to have some over-capacity in the system to allow for people who have to step down either permanently or for a short period for reason such as needing to self-isolate.

**CLEANING SUPPLIES:** Chris Avery asked whether cleaning supplies are being restocked regularly. Fr Simon confirmed that he had recently done so in advance of the re-opening. Chris said that she was happy to volunteer to do shopping for the church as required, or any parishioners who are unable to do so, as she lives near the Bar Hill Tesco.

**ACTION:** put regular notes in the newsletter and keep-in-touch email reiterating the appeals for volunteers for both stewarding and children's liturgy and emphasise that training will be provided (**FACIL GROUP**)

### 3. Christmas preparations

Mass booking for the Christmas Masses will be done through Eventbrite. A link to the Eventbrite pages is now on the website. 50 tickets per Mass can be pre-booked. Booking can also be made by phoning or emailing the parish office. Extra stewards will be needed to cover all the Masses. All bookings and steward rotas for these Masses for stewards on Boxing Day are being done through the office.

## GENERAL DISCUSSION

**USING THE PARISH ROOM FOR OVERFLOW CAPACITY:** needs extra stewards and technical solution for providing video and audio. It was agreed that if there are enough stewards to cover this, and the tech group are able to sort out the tech side then we will offer this area for the 4pm and 5pm Masses on Christmas Eve.

**WILL MIDNIGHT MASS BE ONLINE OR BOOKABLE:** it is currently available to be booked but if there are low booking numbers for this Mass Fr Simon will review and possibly make it an online only Mass.

**STEWARDING:** If we don't have enough stewards for a particular Mass then it will need to be moved to an online only Mass and any reservations made will be cancelled and the ticket holders informed. Stewards will need to be comfortable with enforcing the rules and possibly dealing with difficult situations where people may turn up thinking they have a booking but are not on the list of reservations etc. Full training must be given to all new stewards.

**SERVERS:** Fr Simon would welcome any servers who would like to serve at the Christmas Masses and will provide them with a full face shield so that they can perform their usual duties.

**FAMILY MASSES (4pm and 6pm):** Helena will provide child-friendly interaction for the 4pm Mass, but this will need to be incorporated into the risk assessment for the Mass. Everyone must remain in their seats, including children involved in any drama.

MASSES are still expected to be kept to 45 mins in length.

**LIVE SINGING** for multiple singers at Mass as done at 11am Mass for recording this week is probably limited to livestreaming only due to the amount of social distancing space required.

**CAROL SINGING** – Chris Avery wondered if anyone would be interested in doing some carolling in the car park, possibly on Christmas Eve either well before the start of the evening Masses or at some time between the 6pm and 10pm Masses. A video of this could also be made and shared.

**ADDITIONAL POINT:** All stewards, readers, servers and musicians need to make sure that they are booked into the Masses at which they are planning to perform their ministries.

**ACTION:** Follow up volunteers for the Christmas week and Christmas Masses. Update the steward instructions in connection with managing the people arriving with or without booking/arriving late etc and send out a short video reminder about the processes to be followed as a steward at any Mass. **(STEVE W)**

**ACTION:** add to the Eventbrite booking page that those with a reservation should arrive no later than 15 minutes before the start of Mass **(REECE)**

Update the website with this information also, as it currently says 5mins before Mass starts  
**(REECE/RICHARD B)**

Add this information to any emails sent about EVENTBRITE booking. **(REECE)**

**ACTION:** check that car parking rules are suspended for Christmas Day **(REECE/FR SIMON)**

**ACTION:** make sure we have a minimum of 3 stewards per Mass confirmed. If we don't, check with those who have booked and ask if any would volunteer to be a steward at that Mass. If we still don't have enough stewards then close the Eventbrite page and inform those who have booked that the Mass will be online only. This will need to be done latest one week before Mass takes place. Any new steward volunteers must be referred to Stephen Warde for the training video

**ACTION:** do we have enough additional stewards to offer the Parish Room and Narthex for extra capacity seating? If yes, add availability to Eventbrite on the 4pm and 6pm Masses.  
**(FACIL GROUP/REECE)**

**ACTION:** include an announcement in communications with those involved in supporting the liturgy in any way that they need to be booked in for that Mass they are helping at.

**ACTION:** ask the musicians of the parish if they would be interested in doing some carol singing in the car park for passers-by and, if there are volunteers, make appropriate arrangements. **(CHRIS AVERY)**

**ACTION:** arrange for servers to be contacted about recommencing serving in particular for Christmas Masses **(FACIL GROUP/FR SIMON)**

**ACTION:** ensure risk assessments are in place for the Christmas Masses **(FACIL GROUP)**

#### 4. Date for next Meeting

Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> January at 7.30pm

Although it is early days, please think about ideas for how we can celebrate Easter under pandemic restrictions, for example: drivethru veneration of the Cross, livestreamed Passion reading?