

SS BRENDAN, COLUMBA & JOHN PARISH FORUM MEETING No 3.

21 March 2013 held at St John's

PRESENT: - Please see attendance list at Appendix 'A'. A number of apologies were received.

| <u>No</u> | <u>Item</u> | <u>ACTION</u> |
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| 1. | <u>Introduction</u> FrMC opened the meeting and welcomed Fr Joe Gee and Fr Frank Parkinson to their first forum meeting and representatives from our three parishes. He explained that the business of the meeting would focus on four key themes, namely:- <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developing a vision about how we might (or ought to) develop things spiritually and practically across our three churches• Practical matters, including decisions about property• New initiatives and things we haven't considered before• Building on what we have previously discussed or begun to implement All matters should be considered within the context of evangelisation and how we best fulfil our mission of developing our own life of faith and reaching out to our wider community. | |
| 2. | <u>Minutes of Meeting of 18 October 2012</u> The minutes were approved. | |
| 3. | <u>Matters Arising</u> FrMC reflected that there were opportunities to take forward initiatives in respect of the Year of Faith. Fr Joe Gee [FrJG] and James Proctor [JP] offered to work together to develop a discussion group to explore aspects of scripture, our faith, church doctrine and practice. | FrJG and JP |
| 4. | <u>Draft Action Plan Oct 2012</u> The draft Action Plan developed at the October meeting was reviewed and discussed. It was agreed that the Action Plan would be updated and form the basis of all actions going forward. The previous "Action Summary" would be discontinued. Forum members felt strongly that despite the cultural challenges there was a pressing need to address the " <u>Reverence & Respect</u> " issues. A number of proposals had been previously agreed and FrMC suggested that these be addressed in homilies after Easter and thereafter we implement quiet, prayerful music before Sunday Mass and signage at each church reminding parishioners of the need to respect the sacred space of the church. | TP FrMC, FrJG & FrFP |

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| | <p><u>“Sharing the Load”</u> was now a particularly pressing matter. There had been a good response from parishioners who wished to be considered as Extraordinary Eucharistic Ministers.</p> | |
| | <p>However, only three additional parishioners had put themselves forward to volunteer to undertake the ‘Sacristan / Caretaker’ role. There is a pressing need to resource this role. Whilst SJ had resident priests, it could not be assumed that the clergy themselves would be able or available to unlock the church and prepare for Mass. It was noted that some churches and particular Masses were to a degree “self-sustaining” – in that parishioners could be consistently relied upon to carry out the necessary tasks.</p> | |
| | <p>However, other Masses and services, often including Holy Days and funerals, were not properly resourced, resulting in a lack of certainty that all necessary arrangements would be in place. This resulted in stress for clergy and those few parishioners who currently give freely of their time becoming over stretched.</p> | |
| | <p>A further appeal for Sacristans / Caretakers would be made both on the newsletter and at Masses.</p> | FrMC |
| | <p>In the meanwhile, it was agreed that TP would liaise with FrMC and establish a ‘pilot project’ at SB to recruit and train Sacristan / Caretakers. In the meanwhile, TP would share with Frank McDowell [FMcD] and Arthur Rawlinson [AR] the draft ‘Job Specification’ he had developed for SB parish to see whether it could be adapted for use in SC and SJ.</p> | FrMC / TP TP |
| | <p>FrMC reflected that there were opportunities to take forward initiatives in respect of the Year of Faith. Ann Cunliffe [AC] and James Proctor [JP] offered to work together to respond to Pope Benedict XVI’s Year of Faith recommendations with a practical, pastoral and spiritual approach. This Year of Faith mission will take the Eucharist as its central theme, emphasising increased adoration, the new evangelisation and creating opportunities for discussion.</p> | AC /JP |
| | <p>The agreed actions are to be reflected in an updated version and format to form a Draft Action Plan 2013 and this will be issued in due course.</p> | TP |
| 5. | <p><u>Vision for our Parish(es)</u></p> | |
| | <p>FrMC spoke about the future vision for our parish(es) and consulted forum members about how by working together, the future shape of our parish community might develop.</p> | |
| | <p>He reflected that his letter of appointment as Parish Priest indicated the need to keep more than one parish in mind. Previous consultation exercises confirmed that a natural and practical alignment of parishes included SB, SJ and SC operating as a cluster.</p> | |

We now have all the constituent parts of our “natural unit” under one parish priest, as well as the assistance of Frs Gee and Parkinson for an unknown period of time.

The forum agreed that it would be counterproductive to spend time setting up a 3-parish model, with all the potential overlaps, and then ultimately having to undo those things to eventually make this one parish.

All present agreed that It would be better to devote our energy to establishing a coherent and unified parish structure from the beginning, so that we can set up the appropriate structures for its long-term development and sustainability.

Seeing ourselves as one parish with three churches, would give each of the constituent parishes the opportunity of an equal and meaningful stake in shaping the future. This represented real opportunities for growth and developing confidence in each other as we build the future together.

FrMC explained that there are also practical financial and administrative benefits of operating as a single parish.

Over the past few years, with SB & SJ, we have already brought a number of things together. This joint Parish Forum is one such example; the CAFOD group is another

The overriding consideration was to ensure proper provision for the pastoral care of all our parishioners.

FrMC invited comments from the forum members who welcomed the proposal and felt that it was a pragmatic and sensible step to take. It was recognised that some parishioners might find the proposal controversial, but provided there was good communication and support, then it could present many benefits spiritually and practically.

FrMC explained that the process of amalgamation would take a little while and that would give us the space we needed to properly and fully consider the coming together of our churches into one parish.

There is an established process, overseen by the Diocesan Boundaries Board which involves:

- Consulting with the parishioners of each of the constituent parishes
- Clarifying the borders of those parishes in relation to neighbouring parishes
- Defining the boundaries of the new parish
- Making a formal proposal to the Bishop
- The bishop consulting with the Diocesan Council of Priests
- If approved, the issuing of a canonical decree to formally establish the new parish

FrMC emphasised that the process of amalgamation is about the bringing together of geographical areas and of people (parishioners); it is not about buildings & property. FrMC also made it very clear that we are in effect “*one community with three church buildings*”.

Given the support of the forum, FrMC would now make the necessary initial approach to the Bishop to begin the process of consultation within our three churches.

As regards weekday Masses at SB and SJ, FrMC explained that we have a pattern which uses both buildings and preserves aspects of what each separate parish had previously. He was particularly mindful that there was no weekday Mass at SC at present, but he was working to address that shortly.

FrMC

To reinforce the unity within our community, FrMc explained that we will celebrate the forthcoming Triduum (the most important three days in the life of the Church each year) on each of those days in just one of our churches. Despite having more than one priest available, and to emphasise that the priests are also part of this “one community”, the central feast of our Church Year will be celebrated as one community. So, the services would be celebrated as follows: - Maundy Thursday (SB), Good Friday (SC) and the Easter Vigil (SJ). The usual Sunday Masses will be celebrated on Easter Sunday. This suggestion received the full backing of the Forum.

FrMC asked the forum to consider another practical issue; the timing of the Saturday evening Masses. The present arrangement requires two priests to be available and precludes offering help in neighbouring parishes if the need arises. It was agreed that a pragmatic solution might be to move the 6pm Mass at SC to 5pm and retain the 6.30pm at SJ. FrMC undertook to seek the approval of the Bishop for this change, subject to consultation with parishioners by means of the newsletter.

6. Property Matters

FrMC

FrMC advised the meeting that together with the diocesan authorities, the arrangements for Fr Francis Parkinson’s accommodation had been reviewed. It had been decided it would be best to develop St Brendan’s Presbytery as his new home. Preparatory work has begun and the presbytery should be ready for occupation in May. The Diocese is exploring an alternative appropriate use for St Columba’s Presbytery as the property requires significant modernisation.

FrMC updated the meeting on the outcome of the discussions he had held with diocesan authorities about the proposed extension of the Patmos Room. The previous concept, whilst inspirational, was regarded as potentially too ambitious and costly, and a more modest extension at lower cost was envisaged.

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| | FrMC asked for thanks to be recorded for the work done by Keith Hamilton to date. | |
| | AR and DR then presented to the meeting a drawing of an alternative extension proposal. The forum welcomed the proposal and parishioners were invited to take away copies for consideration and comment. John Burton [JB] offered to work with AR and DR and to have professional CAD drawings produced to develop the concept further. These would then be put on display in church and on the parish website. It was also noted that both planning and building regulations would need to be complied with. | DR, AR & JB |
| 7. | <u>Social Update</u> | |
| | Frances Smith [FS] advised the forum that a quiz night was being planned for September and a parish dance would be held at Dunscar Conservative Club on 20 December 2013. | All to note |
| 8. | <u>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</u> | |
| | The next meeting will be held on a Thursday in July 2013 and the time and venue will be confirmed in due course. | All to note |
| | Appendices:- | |
| | 'A' – Attendance List | |

Appendix 'A'

Alyson Grundy [AG]
Ann Cunliffe [AC]
Arthur Rawlinson [AR]
Catherine Grundy [CG]
Danny Ramsden [DR]
David Day [DD]
Eileen Hosie [EH]
Father Frank Parkinson [FrFP]
Father Joe Gee [FrJG]
Father M Cooke (Chair) [FrMC]
Frances Smith [FS]
Frank McDowell [FMcD]
Ivor Smith [IvS]
James Proctor [JTP]
Jan Thomason [JT]
Janet Hill [JH]
Joan Cranshaw [JC]
John Burton [JB]
John Carroll [JCa]
John Cranshaw [JoC]
Margaret O'Brien [MO'B]
Margaret Russell [MR]
Marie Boardman [MB]
Michael Latham [MiL]
Peter Hosie [PH]
Rita Livesey [RL]
Roy Shepherd [RS]
Russell Crocker [RC]
Teresa Taylor [TT]
Terry Smith [TS]
Tony Proctor (Secretary) [TP]