

ST. AUGUSTINE OF ENGLAND

Parish Meeting

Wednesday February 27th @ 7.30pm

Present: Father Dominic (FD), Deacon Kevin (DK), Father Paul (FP), Paul Northam (PN), Libby Service (LS), Michael Keating (MK), Angela Keating (AK), Stephanie Withers (SW), Mary Clark (MC), Josie Concannon (JC), and Helen Brookes (HB)

Father Dominic welcomed everyone and opened the meeting with a Prayer.

Apologies: None

Minutes of previous meeting: approved and signed by Father Dominic

Matters Arising: Father Dominic reported that:

- Academy status for St. Augustine's school is still progressing.
- Head teachers and governors to meet with the diocese education service (DES) to look at this, and to prepare for it.
- Some hesitance to begin with but moving forward.
- Over 50% of diocesan schools are now part of an academy.

Looking forward: Father Dominic suggested the possibility of a parish gift for Dassan and Tessy and their two daughters by way of a thankyou and leaving gift, as they are shortly going back to India. We will miss them.

Building work: Father Dominic reported:

- Roof work successfully completed
- Brick work to start next month.
- Funding; no decision yet on fund-raising. Diocese have given permission to use an overdraft facility for the work.
- Unit profits good- Father questioned whether to use some of the endowments for further work, or whether to continue increasing these.
- Father Paul suggested improvements to church heating, especially in Pugin chapel which currently has no heating. Father Dominic said it may be possible to extend current heating pipes for this. He asked (MK) to discuss this with them. Permission will be needed, will consider this.
- Loop system- discussion as to its effectiveness, not sure how well this is working. Speaker's need improvement.

Further discussion on use of finances: (MK) said over the years we have a surplus over expenditure. Diocese advises investment in unit scheme of this which creates further surplus. (MK) considers surplus to be for diocese for poorer parishes. (FD) said it is sometimes better to get an overdraft than to use the surplus, especially when interest rates are low. He said parishes help one another financially.

Catechesis: (FD) suggested another possible option is to use the parish surplus to fund a salary for a Catechist. (FP) and (PN) spoke of the importance of a good job description for this. A discussion took place regards sharing roles of Catechist and Chaplain; the likely benefits of a school chaplain for example and what this could mean. It was agreed that we need to encourage our young people in parish activities and hopefully to a greater attendance at Mass. (FD) mentioned the success of parish sports at Christ the King parish in Coventry.

Evangelisation: Paul Northam, evangelisation field worker appointed by the diocese introduced himself to those who do not know him and explained a little about himself and his work. He works in 6 parishes including St. Augustine's. He explained that parish evangelisation is about formation. Formation within our parish began with following the publication 'Welcome to Witness.' From there we tried to think of ways to respond to the suggestions. Some initiatives we came up with were:

- Welcome Home for Christmas
- Support of Night Fever (Legion of Mary)
- Parish Welcome Booklet
- Holy Hours – prayer first
- School/College leavers packs (Legion of Mary)
- Attendance of event days and Maryvale courses
- Parish Questionnaires
- Prayer Boxes

Paul then went on to say that we need ways of reminding us to evangelise. We are the 'Body of Christ.' What does Christ call us to do? If this thought is at the heart of all we do, all projects will help towards building up the 'Body of Christ.' He then encouraged us to refer to Pope Francis' Church document; *Evangelii Gaudium*, para 28.

Paul then told us that activities within the parish are fed back to the Bishops and other parishes. He mentioned the 'Divine Renovation' conference led by Fr. James Mallon. He said that he had showed the Evangelisation group a video on this which discussed ways to look outwards, journeying from maintenance to mission. Fr. Mallon says the Church has an identity crisis. We are a missionary church but sometimes we concentrate on maintaining the flock, which is a challenge in itself, but we need mission. To Go, to Baptise and to Preach. We need to make disciples, someone who is alive, with a personal relationship with Christ, and wants to share this relationship, we must then become Apostles or missionaries. The Church needs to nourish disciples to maturity as Apostles/Missionaries.

SVP: (LS) gave a brief update on the work of the organisation; currently working with homeless, those with addictions and working with other organisations for this. She mentioned the 'Comfort meal' provided once a month, and that they are working in St. Augustines school to encourage 'Mini Vinnies.'

Our meeting ended with Father Paul saying a prayer and giving us a blessing.

