

Parish of Effingham and Fetcham
4th Parish Annual General Meeting held on 27th April 2017
at St Alphege Hall Effingham

Present:

Fr John Inglis

Deacon Ian Wells

Michael Bray – Chairman PPT

Chris Tailby – Parish Treasurer

Marion Cutler

And 28 parishioners

Joanne Matthews – PPT Social and Events

Keith Walker – PPT Church Support and Teams

Sue Fisher – Gift Aid

Chris Spiers

Fr John opened the meeting with a prayer.

Introduction.

Michael Bray welcomed all who were attending and thanked them for coming. He drew attention to the forthcoming fifth anniversary, in November, of Father John's arrival that heralded the start of our new Parish. He highlighted some of the successes of 2016 and particularly he reminded all of the hard work and consistent contribution of the Parish Planning Team and the Parish Finance Team. He thanked them for the amount of often unsung and daily work that they do and without whom little of what you will hear could be accomplished. He reminded all that volunteers are always welcome to join to continue the support for Father John's mission as our Parish Priest.

Sacristy and Services.

Father John spoke about the continuing hard work of those parishioners who contribute to the 1st Communion and Confirmation programmes and the need to encourage more parishioners, youngsters and adults to become Servers. He also stated that the Parish still needs a Sacristan to coordinate the servers and maintain the sacristies at both churches. He expressed his grateful thanks to all those involved for their support.

Finally, he reminded the meeting of the importance being addressed by the Diocese on Safeguarding both for children and vulnerable adults. All parishioners involved regularly with these groups require DBS clearance and Nigel Trott and Eileen Levan were reviewing the clearances in the Parish to ensure compliance.

Finances.

Copies of the Parish Accounts for 2016 were available at the meeting. Chris Tailby, the Parish Treasurer, reported that last August the Parish had a Diocesan audit of our accounts and there were very few issues which had to be followed up and none which related to the accounts.

In the 2016 accounts, there was a surplus of £22,000 when compared with £35,776 last year. On the Income side, Offertory collections this year were better than last year, but that was mainly because the Christmas Clergy collection and the last collection in December 2015 were booked in the 2016 accounts. Donation income included payments for graves and monies given to the Parish by generous parishioners. This income was down compared to 2015. In that year, we had several "forward purchases" of graves. We continued to be grateful to HMRC for the Gift Aid and GASD payments and especially to Sue Fisher who manages the Gift Aid scheme. The GASD payments are dependent on achieving the requisite cash collections in each Church and the fact that most of the Christmas and Easter services were held at Fetcham helped boost the cash take and the GASD payment. Bank interest was down as expected due to paying out funds for the building work completed on the Annex and Hall. The accounts did not show second collection income as it belonged to the charities on whose behalf the money was collected.

Turning to expenditure, it was noted that costs were net of the building construction expenditure to give a better idea of the costs incurred in running the Parish. The big costs were Establishment and Property which included heating and lighting and maintenance, but the Parish has joined a new Diocesan electricity supply scheme which should see a reduction in these costs. Property costs, with two

Churches and a Hall, were high especially as the Parish owned a graveyard which required maintenance. During 2016, the Parish put in place a fixed contract for grass cutting using one contractor and, although it would take time to settle down grounds costs were lower than last year. During the year, there were remedial works to the Presbytery at Fetcham and the Parish does get rental income from it which helped to balance the maintenance costs. Hall rental income was down. The Parish gave £5000 to St Peter's School, the nearest Catholic maintained school, to assist them with the fund raising for their extension. Following the successful completion of the new Annex and St Alphege Hall the Parish donated £20,000 to the Diocese for priest training.

Finally, Chris Tailby informed the meeting that Diocesan rules require Treasurers to stand down after five years and, therefore he would be retiring from the Treasurer's post before the next AGM. A volunteer would need to be in place well before to enable a smooth handover.

Michael Bray thanked Chris Tailby for the daily hard work and dedication that he had shown over the past year to keep the Parish finances on track and healthy, not a task that can be done without a lot of work. The success of his work was highlighted by the recent successful Diocesan Audit of the Parish Accounts.

Adult Formation

Michael Bray highlighted the 2016/17 events which included the Parish Pilgrimage to Rome and Assisi, the Advent Sessions introducing Lectio Divina, the Lent Sessions on the Old Testament led very well by Father Laurence O'Keefe from Chilworth and the Churches Together Art in Christianity Sessions before Christmas.

He outlined the suggestions for the future which included further sessions, probably in Advent, by Fr Laurence on the New Testament.

Marion Cutler reported on the very successful Parish UK Pilgrimage to Our Lady of Consolation in West Grinstead which had been supported by some 45 parishioners of all ages in October. She also outlined the planned Parish Day to the Seaside at Rottingdean on 3 June 2017 which was aimed at providing a day out for all ages to come together.

Deacon Ian reported on the Grandparents Association which had been developing well in the Parish, led by Jean Wells. The Diocese was used as a Springboard by the founder Catherine Wiley to introduce the Catholic Grandparents Association into England and Wales. From that first meeting in Crawley which several hundred attended and Parish groups were then formed. On a Parish visit about 5 years ago the then Bishop Kieran urged our Parishioners to attend the First meeting emphasising the important role that Grandparents play in passing on the Faith. Over 50 turned up and monthly meetings had continued on a Wednesday afternoon. Passing on the Faith and support for each other as Catholic Grandparents was the purpose of the Association and each meeting started with tea and homemade cake. This was followed the Grandparents prayer which was written for the organisation by Pope Benedict. Then the CGA news and Diocesan news was spoken about and there may be handouts. Over the years, the CGA have had a Mass for the Healing of the Family tree, quizzes, outings, films and some very interesting Speakers.

Brendan Kelly had volunteered to lead a Parish initiative called Caring in the Family which aims to provide support and guidance to families, to encourage them to share concerns and help each other.

Youth.

On behalf of Jean Wells Deacon Ian reported that the Parish Confirmations take place at St Joseph's Epsom on Saturday 6th May. The Candidates would be Confirmed by Bishop Richard Moth. The programme that was being used this year was called Transformed in Christ. Youth with their vitality often transformed those who work with them as The Spirit moves amongst all. Jean would be standing down after 20 years as the leading Catechist in the Parish, a significant time and effort on behalf of the Parish for which she deserved warm thanks from all. Annette Turner would be taking on the role for future groups with Mary Sherrington and Rosann Miller, who joined the Confirmation Catechist Team this year supporting her. Over the years Jean had experienced fun, faith and friendship with large groups of

wonderful young people and included Retreat Days at Worth or Coolham and the Recent 'Flame ' Concert at Wembley. Thanks go to those currently working so hard on the Confirmation Programme and for the support provided over many years by Jo Mathews and also Daphne McCloud who ran the Confirmations in Effingham for many years. A Confirmation Celebration would be held at the 11am Mass on Sunday 14 May at the Church of the Holy Spirit when the Candidates would receive their certificates.

Father John reported on the First Holy Communion programme, on which he leads, and the work and enthusiasm provided by all those who help the young people move towards this important milestone in their Catholic lives.

First Holy Communion and Confirmation classes continue in a very successful format and maintain the attention of the Parish Youth. However, there was little going on in the Parish targeted at the younger members post Confirmation other than some going to Lourdes. It was felt that a lot more work needs doing in this area and a person was needed to bring a lot of enthusiasm to this whole area.

Church Support Church Support and Team's Coordination:

Keith Walker reported that the Deanery Eucharistic Ministers Day of Reflection was scheduled to take place at St Teresa's on 27 May 2017. More Ministers were needed, but recognised that any approach should come from Father John.

The Church of the Holy Spirit was in need of more volunteer cleaners. Discussion followed on the change in lives of people in today's world and it may be that a paid cleaner would be required.

Charitable Activities:

Chris Speirs reminded the meeting of the four main charities supported by the Parish; Cafod, Pitstop, APF/Missio and Fair Trade, as well as Michael and Mary Agius' Tanzanian charity. Over £4,000 had been raised by the Parish for two CAFOD collections. The Parish provided a meal for the Meeting Room Charity every Friday in St Alphege Hall which seemed to be meeting a real need. Churches Together in Effingham and Bookham have been organising Connect twice a month which provides much needed companionship for carers of people with dementia.

The Parish would be starting up an SVP "lite" group to undertake home visits in conjunction with Eucharistic Ministers and the Legion of Mary and may broaden its approach to include prison visiting. Volunteers were sought to get the group started.

Kit Oliver has proposed that the Parish start up a group to provide a social meeting in the Annex at Fetcham with the aim of people setting up tables at which they share particular skills, such as sewing, drawing and writing etc to encourage other people. The group would be called "Do and Raise". Volunteers were sought to run the group and offer their talents perhaps twice a month.

At both churches there was starting a Bucket appeal for spare change to go towards supporting overseas aid and prisons. There was some discussion as to whether such an appeal would clash with the work of Missio and the Red Boxes which had been going successfully for many years.

Social.

Joanne Matthews drew attention to the very successful events that had been organised last year including the Hog Roast, the Ecumenical Advent Service with St Mary's Church Fetcham, and the pre-Christmas Parish supper at which 60 parishioners enjoyed a four-course meal. She outlined the events planned for 2017 that were listed on the Parish diary of Events circulated at the meeting and included the Hog Roast on 2 July 17. Michael Bray thanked Joanne for all the hard work she put into organising Parish events and what a success they had been.

Liz Cross drew attention to the very successful New Parishioners lunch held in the Autumn and it was agreed this should become a regular bi-annual event. The Parish Supper this year would take place on 25 Nov 17.

Communication:

Keith Walker reported that the Parish website was proving a success with some 150 “hits” each day. Included in the website is the weekly newsletter which is uploaded every Friday. The address is: www.effinghamandfetcham.org.uk . In addition, Michael Bray runs the Parish email circulation list which has proved to be a useful additional means of passing information. Far Laurence’s Lent Talks on the Old Testament had been uploaded and were available to all.

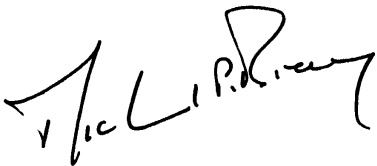
AOB.

Tessa Knott raised four items:

- a. More welcomers were needed at the Church of the Holy Spirit Fetcham at 11am Mass on Sundays.
- b. Might it be possible to open the two churches at specific times of the day to enable people to enter and pray. There was discussion on the options, the potential problems and the logistics. After discussion, it was agreed the Parish team would take an action to consider the proposal further.
- c. All Catholics were being encouraged to go out and spread the good news. The practical implications and possibilities were discussed and all agreed that such an inspirational act might be possible, but each person was encouraged to go out and show people by their example the joys of the Good News.
- d. She made the suggestion that the parish might consider a calendar using photographs of the Church flowers over the year which could then be compiled into a calendar. Whilst it was agreed it was a good idea further work would be needed to identify a good photographer and then produce the calendar.

Tessa Wayne raised the subject of a bench in the Cemetery at Effingham and it was agreed that it would be considered by the Parish Finance Committee.

The meeting finished with a prayer.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Bray', written in a cursive style.

Michael Bray
Chairman PPT
15 May 2017