

Parish of Effingham and Fetcham

6th Annual General Meeting held on 18 November 2019 at St Alphege Hall

Present:

Father Stephen Dingley
Deacon Ian Wells
Michael Bray
Brendan Kelly - Treasurer
And 33 parishioners.

Fr Stephen opened the meeting with a prayer

Introduction and Review of the past year

1. Michael Bray welcomed all to this annual meeting of the parish community. He especially welcomed Fr Stephen for whom this was his first Parish AGM. He particularly thanked all the members of the PPT and PFC who give so much of their time and skill to help Fr Stephen and Deacon Ian run the Parish, much of it unsung and unnoticed. The Parish Planning Team had now closed down and Fr Stephen would be outlining the new phase of Parish organisation.
2. He informed the meeting that much had gone on over the past year and highlighted a number of key areas:
 - a. Safeguarding. Richard Carson had volunteered to take on this very important task to bring up to date all DBS checks and clearances especially for those parishioners whose responsibilities bring them into contact with the young and vulnerable of the Parish.
 - b. GDPR. The General Data Protection Rules require the Parish to check all the information held on people and to ensure that individuals were in agreement for their information to be held. Rosann Miller had kindly agreed to assist the Parish office bringing all details onto one database. St Teresa's School has also offered to advise and assist in a review of compliance with the rules.
 - c. Adult Formation. A number of sessions had been held to encourage parishioners in their Faith journeys including Fr Stephen's Advent talks in 2018, the Lent sessions this year using Bishop Robert Barron's videos and the Eucharistic Ministers Day in May 2019.
 - d. Social concerns. Including the Legion of Mary, Fairtrade, Shoebox, Do and Raise and ecumenical groups such as the Meeting Room lunches, , Connect and Tuesday teas.
 - e. Services. Eucharistic Adoration every Tuesday and Thursday, the CAFOD Creation Mass and Supper and Ecumenical Services.
 - f. Social Activities. The very successful annual Hog Roast, Parish Quiz Night and many more events that bring the Parish community together.
 - g. Communications. He thanked Keith Walker for all the work he does maintaining the Parish website which has a regular stream of "hits" each week. He outlined the work being started to produce a Parish Activities

booklet that will list all those groups and activities that go on, together with notes on them and the names of organisers. He also mentioned that it may be that the Parish magazine will be restarted.

h. “The Word who is Life”. The AGM was reminded of the work being done in developing the Bishop’s 2030 Plan for the Diocese launched last December 2018 with the focus so far being on the Diocesan offices plus Deanery boundaries. There was still much work to be completed.

Parish Financial Review

3. Brendan Kelly, the Parish Treasurer, gave a brief overview of the Parish financial situation which was generally healthy with a small surplus of income over expenditure. The Accounts had been placed on both church notice boards following the Diocesan Auditors approval in May 2019. The Parish now operates a budget to keep expenditure under control. He informed the meeting of some of the major items of expenditure including donations to the Seminary, refurbishment of parish buildings and the Golden Jubilee stained glass windows at the Church of the Holy Spirit. He highlighted the gift Aid scheme run by the Parish and thanked Sue Fisher for all her detailed hard work to maintain the scheme for the Parish.

4. In response to a question on the apparent £10,000 Bank charges he confirmed that this was an accounting process within the (rather limited) old software whereby errors and reversals had to be entered and reversed in the Cash Book. Hence the same sum is also included in the credit side of the Bank Ledger / account. The new software introduced this year does have a “Suspense account” which hopefully will tidy this aspect up in future

Highlights of the Year

5. Deacon Ian outlined some of the major highlights of the year which showed a thriving Parish and much of the innovation and growth of the Parish in particular the encouragement being given to new young families joining the Parish. In particular he highlighted:

a. Welcome. Events such as the Hog Roast summer lunch, the New Parishioners lunch and the recent Grandparents and toddlers’ lunch which all proved great successes in bringing in the young families to the centre of our community.

b. First Holy Communion. For 2019 there were 14 young people and for this coming year 13 have signed up so far which are very encouraging signs of growth.

c. Altar Servers. At both churches there has been an increase in young Altar Servers coming forward, being trained by Fr Stephen with support from Chris Tailby, and starting to serve.

d. Youth. One of the best activities to emerge from the May Come Holy Spirit day has been the development of the Youth Group. With great leadership from Kamilla Smith and her team the younger and teenagers’ groups are growing.

e. Coffee after Mass. The Sunday morning gathering after Mass for coffee, and especially biscuits for the young, has been steadily growing and is a great way of

meeting new people in a relaxed atmosphere. He encouraged all to stay on for coffee and meet new people.

f. Church of the Holy Spirit Golden Jubilee. Deacon Ian reminded the meeting of the wonderful celebration held, with the Bishop and some 200 guests, to recognise the jubilee of the church and community with the installation and blessing of the stained glass windows.

g. Do and Raise. As an example of parish sense of community the Do and Raise group, from an "idea" of the late beloved Kit Oliver, has grown into a thriving group of parishioners who meet for chat and coffee and to make items for sale with the proceeds going to deserving causes, such as the current Crib figures which would be raffled and proceeds going to the Passage.

The new Parish Structure

6. Fr Stephen informed the meeting that he was changing the structure of the Parish organisation in order to assist him in running the Parish whilst undertaking his other commitments in the Diocese, including two days a week lecturing at the Seminary and being appointed by the Bishop as the Clergy ongoing formation lead. These tasks mean that the Parish laity need to take on more responsibility which they should do anyway as it is their Parish and responsibility must be shared.

7. To do this work he has set up the Parish Team (PT), himself, Deacon Ian and four parishioners (Michael Bray, Rosann Miller, Frances Riches and Kamilla Smith). In addition, he has drawn up a Parish Organisation Structure (which was shared on screen with the meeting) which consists of five main columns headed liturgy and prayer, formation, social, care and ecumenism and supported by columns for Plant and estate, finance and administration/communications. The impressive range of identified roles reflected the amount of good work that goes on in the Parish already and will grow. A copy of the draft structure is attached to these notes.

8. Fr Stephen took the opportunity to thank the many people involved in the work of the Parish, in particular Deacon Ian, without whom he could not run the Parish, the Parish Planning Team members and Richard Carson who has taken on the onerous and very demanding task of Safeguarding. Finally, he wished to record his grateful thanks, admiration for all the hard work, her cheerfulness and willingness to do more to Amanda who is the Parish Office.

New Evangelisation

9. Fr Stephen opened the subject by outlining the New Evangelisation on which the Parish is embarking, an exciting and challenging journey of small and large steps that will involve everybody and needs the guidance of the Holy Spirit to achieve the goal. We all need to be outward looking and working to spread the Good News which may well need a gradual change in attitude and approach that will take some courage. He started last Advent with the talks on the Kingdom of God and New Evangelisation, followed by the Lent Sessions of Bishop Robert Barron's videos and discussion and then the May 2019 Come Holy Spirit day at which many Parishioners came and shared ideas, enthusiasm and willingness to move forward. The next

stage will be the Advent Talks he is giving in December on Science and Religion, all designed to help us on our journeys.

10. There were a number of initiatives suggested at the May session, including Open Church to reach out to the local community and the Youth movement for the young in the Parish, coffee after Mass, the New Parishioners lunch and the Grandparents and toddlers lunch which all come under the new Evangelisation banner and show how willing the Parish to embrace new ideas.

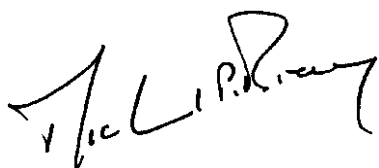
11. He confirmed that he is seeking a small group of committed parishioners to form a small planning group to develop the New Evangelisation. Planning is beginning to undertake some more formal evangelical movement which may take the form of Alpha or a similar type of course, not only for Parishioners, but also to encourage and welcome others who may be interested and tempted to join us and also those who may be just casually curious but looking for something more.

Parishioners Views and Open Discussion

12. There was a wide-ranging discussion on a number of the subjects raised, in particular:

- a. Coffee. Support for the Sunday morning coffee but parishioners need to be encouraged, particularly after the 9am Mass, and young parishioners be encouraged to volunteer to help serve.
- b. Open Church. The importance of keeping the doors open was stressed and welcoming ecumenical groups is part of that welcoming. It was felt to be a good idea to have notice boards near the public roads informing passers by that the Church was open and encouragement to visit. CCTV cameras will be installed in Our Lady of Sorrows Church, with recording equipment in the office, to enable the church to be monitored during daylight hours.
- c. Safeguarding. Using her experience of work with the Vatican and Catholic Bishops of England and Wales Baroness Sheila Hollins offered the Parish a session on the work concerning abuse in the church that she has been doing. Whilst accepting that it is a tragic and very serious issue it is also a good news story as people come to terms with the outcomes and it is an opportunity for Catholic Laity to learn how to respond to the negative questions being asked. There was considerable enthusiasm for such a session, probably in the New Year. Invitations should be extended, as an opportunity for parents to learn as well, to the two Catholic schools in the Parish and St Peters' and St Andrew's in leatherhead and St Peter's in Merrow.

Fr Stephen closed the meeting with a prayer.



Michael Bray
22nd November 2019