

# Catholic Parish of Belper and Duffield Parish Pastoral Council | MINUTES

## Open Meeting 13/03/2018

Held at St Margaret's Duffield

### Attending council members:

Fr Michael Kirkham	present	Sean Lambert	present
David Barlow (Chair)	present	David Pipe	present
(Vice Chair)	vacant	Jannice Richthof	apologies
Melita Tooher (Secretary)	present	Niels Richthof	present
Fiona Cartmell	present	Alan Ward	present
Anne Halliday	present	John Wareing	present
John McCabe	present		

### Parishioners present:

Barbara Wareing (minutes with Melita), Chris Jelley, Eileen & Keith Wharam, Bernard Holden, Mark Edwards, Pat Whetton, Margaret Kirkham, Maureen Walsh, Julia Dodd, Ros O'Melia, John Kelsall, Heather & Alan Ward, Tricia Lloyd, David Pipe, Donna Roberts, Theresa & Sean Lambert, Ann Gannon, Donna Roberts, Anne Halliday, David Sudbury, Margaret des Forges, Yvonne Hilliard, Liz Worth, Ann Bunting, John Barlow.

### 1. Welcome

David Barlow opened the meeting and thanked all for attendance.

### 2. Readings and Prayer

Anne Halliday read two readings from 1 Peter. Hymn and Prayer.

### 3. Open Meeting Discussion

Fr Michael introduced the open meeting, as an opportunity for us to consider how we can respond in anticipation of Pastoral re-organisation in the Deanery. Leading on from Living

Stones 2012/13, the outcome of which is still unknown, there are some facts which we are aware of. The Derby Deanery currently consists of seven priests, one of whom is currently in hospital. The Deanery covers a large area from Ashbourne to Borrowash. There are five full time priests, one of whom is in his 80's and two others in their 70's. Retirement plans are not currently known, but it is thought that when priests retire they will not be replaced. There is a requirement for there to be three priests to constitute a Deanery. The main catholic congregations are in Matlock, Belper and Alfreton. It has been recommended that priests should celebrate a maximum of three Sunday masses. It could be questioned by the Bishop why we have four churches along a relatively short stretch of the A6, and it is possible that some churches could be closed. Could we look at other ways to sustain our faith? Can a church be sustained without a weekly mass? We will need to work with other churches to thrive and the laity will need to be more proactive. We can look at this challenge as a crisis or an opportunity.

How can we prepare for this future at Duffield and Belper, remaining outward looking?

Fiona – Some of the Scottish Isles have to wait a few weeks for the priests to visit – in between visits the parishioners celebrate in house groups.

David S – We have word & communion during week – could we have a homily emailed from the Bishop?

Heather – In France they have sectors with Sunday Masses being said in two areas of the Deanery.

Fr. M - Does anything happen in the churches for those who cannot travel?

Heather - This depends on the individual churches – there is a minibus that offers travel. Meeting in this way offers larger celebrations.

Yvonne – Can we have more celebrations of Word and Communion?

David S- Can we have consecrated wine (Precious Blood) for use in services and Word and Communion?

Fr M – Yes as long as there is an appropriate vessel for storage.

David B – How much notice do priests have to give to retire?

Fr M – The Bishop asks for notification each spring, but retirement can be forced without notice.

Chris J - is it possible to offer priesthood to married people?

Niels – Why can't we recruit more priests? It's our calling to mission and to grow the parish of Christians.

10. Heather – In Northampton there are 10 and in East Anglia 12 seminaries – in these areas there is a focus on developing the Catholic Identity through provision of activities through large gatherings of young people, and well as focused prayer for vocations.

Ros – Write to Bishop regarding celibacy. We foster faith within our community and have good parish groups – would it be a good idea for each group to raise awareness through writing an update for each addition of Journeys (Parish Magazine)? Outreach is a lay responsibility – the work that Jannice is doing with The Belper Passion is achieving this. Could be offer 'Refreshment Days for the Soul' as a means of further outreach?

John B – We are by-passing the main problem – In areas such as the Lakes and Cornwall there is limited availability of priests. How do we cope without a priest? In these areas parishioners run the parish and the priest comes to celebrate mass and sacraments. The Divine Office is used – more of us lay people could make use of this.

John K – We could learn from areas such as Africa, where the areas covered by priests are vast, but where the congregations are growing.

David B – We currently have a vacancy on the PCC – where are the next generation? The SVP membership is dwindling – it has been very difficult to recruit support for the running of the Children's Liturgy – How do we encourage involvement from the young families in the parish?

Anne H – We are stuck in our way of doing things. We need to 'think outside the box'. The purpose of leadership is to build trust and confidence. Ask people what they need and offer a welcoming spirit filled community. Open it up – offer different types of services in this period of opportunity.

Fiona – Part of the problem is that we live in a diverse world but our church is still anti-gay and anti-women, we need to become more inclusive.

Liz – If the reduction in priests was happening now the younger members of the church we get more involved – when the time comes people will do more.

David Pipe – Could we encourage more married priests? Do we use deacons enough? There are two in this Deanery. Has the Bishops Office considered the avenue of recruiting more Deacons? As a major organisation the church should address the decline of priests and parishioners. We shouldn't accept this. How many priests have we currently coming through?

Fr M – Approx 6.

Julia – Could we advertise for priests from outside of the UK?

Fr M – We have priests from Nigeria and India. In the UK we have a higher proportion of priests to parishioners than most other countries and we do not want to deprive other countries from their priests.

Ros – We need to review the role of the priest and also the role of women in the church. Must it be the priest who gives the sermon?

Heather – Wrote to the Bishop regarding more training for women. There are women who could share their thoughts. Catechists train for four years full time to work in the mission. As a parish we need to consider more training – for example could there be a similar role as deacon created for women? There are people who are willing to contribute to the life of the church but feel that they do not have the confidence and knowledge to take on these roles.

Anne H – Taking a course for Catechists, which is run on six Saturdays over a period of two years.

Niels – Could this course be run over weekends and condensed?

Sean – What are Bishops intentions regarding restructuring?

Niels – If we lost St Margaret's as a church our parish would lose a third of his sundry income (through rental of the hall to community groups).

Sean – Restructuring can't be avoided – but could more be done to recruit deacons? For example offering a weekend retreat to learn more about and consider the role could prove helpful.

Heather – In Wales there is a parish bus which collects people from connecting villages – as well as homes and chapels being used to sustain the parish community.

John B – The Bishop can decide where deacons service, and in Birmingham the Bishop would send deacons out to other places. We could encourage our younger people to take on more roles, such as writing the bidding prayers, as well as reading.

Donna – Young people can sometimes consider confirmation as a 'ticket out' as they are then able to decide for themselves whether to attend church or not. Instead we can encourage young people to do a bit more for the church.

Pat - Should we be asking young people what they want?

Donna – Families are now very busy e.g. rugby, football. A lot of families regularly come to church but there is more pull from outside influences.

Anne H - There is the natural period of rebellion during the teenage years – we need to be welcoming.

Heather – We could consider a 'sectioned community' and have a couple of leaders for each section, holding occasional meetings in each area. Each sector takes a role in the celebration of word. Training is made available for leaders – this is building on the idea of 'class' in Methodism (Houses).

Ann G - We are fortunate to have a wonderful youth group supported by Jannice and Niels, and they recently led the Eccum. Service. How do they see us? What do they like? They are our future.

Niels – The Youth Group meet every 2 other Friday. Everyone is welcome to come along and get their views.

Sean - We have no Facebook Page – this would provide a useful and accessible place for younger parishioners to share their views.

Liz – There is an age old problem of demand on time of exams – and of people 16-30 missing from the church.

Theresa – We are 2 miles from The Briars which is excellent – youth prefer to go there to mass/services. They will come back when they are older.

Ann G – The Briars speak to youth on their level.

Margaret D.F. Younger people are introduced through school – but some children do not attend catholic schools.

John Mc – The basic problem is a shortage of priests. Could a consultancy with a marketing company be employed to address the problem?

Chris J – Why do priests have to be Men?

Fr M – This rule was first instated 700 years ago. Eastern Rite have married clergy. There is a clerical desire to control. We can manifest change. Bishops Conferences will take bold decisions and go against canon law. Clergy in Amber Valley – say yes.

Heather - Milton Keynes have re-organised into one parish (The Hub) and priests live together and go out to serve six churches. All the admin is done in the one central place.

Fr M – Mission priests are more able to see how to manage.

John K - Every Parish is different – good to change, as this can rejuvenate.

Ann G - Each priest appeals to a different parish.

Niels – Are we taking any action?

Yvonne – We should hang on to both buildings – St Margaret's is part of the community.

Bernard H – If there is no priest we would need a parish administrator, and this would need to be a paid role.

Niels – Deanery Administrator would be a full time role.

Heather – Deanery would be The Parish.

Ros – We need to communicate with others – knit the parish together.

Theresa – An evening open meeting is difficult for young families to attend. Could we consider a weekend meeting with a children's group to enable younger families to contribute?

Ann G –The Life in the Spirit course was held in afternoon with a crèche and this well attended.

John Mc – We should invite more thoughts and then the PPC could work to pull an action plan together.

David B – Get your thoughts back– Do we need another meeting? Get message out to others not here tonight.

Niels - PPC to contact Bishop? Consult Deanery.

Mark E – What does Bishop expect?

Fr M – There are two new Vicar's General who have been in post for two years, and action is anticipated although the Diocese have not explained any re-organisation as yet. Within our deanery we are thinking creatively, and are considering creation a Deanery Pastoral Council. Things need to change but we don't know when current priests will retire. And it is difficult to plan for something that might not happen for five years.

Mark E – What are Bishops plans for services – Marriage, Deaths, Baptism etc? In Liverpool lay people can officiate at funerals.

Heather – E. Minister can take funerals.

Liz – There must be learning from other areas that the Bishop's Conference can advise us from.

Bernard – All parishes will be different.

Mark E – We don't really know what the plans are, but there is a willingness to do something. More leadership would be helpful.

Fr M – Our views will go back to the deanery.

David P – Consultation with people is what is needed. The solution would be for the Bishop to listen to the people – their hopes and fears.

Ros – Invite Bishop to a meeting.

Anne H – We need clarity and to know the parameters, so that we can be pro-active rather than re-active. We need to contemplate, pray and pilot what could work well.

Fr M - Thanked all for input. During periods of transition people can feel anxious.

11. Hymn of praise, prayer and blessing. Meeting closed at 8:45pm

Next meeting to be held on

Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> June, 7pm until 8:30pm

St Benedict's Room, Our Lady's, Belper.