

WGC Catholic Churches' Advisory Council Meeting Minutes



St Bonaventure's



Our Lady's,
Queen of Apostles



Holy Family

Date:	Wednesday 27 th June 2018	Venue: Our Lady's Sacristy
Chaired by:	Father Norbert	
Present:	Fr. Tom, Anna Grogan, Kathryn Hubbard, Steve Allardice, Bill Hayes, Ernest Owusu-Afriyie, Antonio Monteiro, Ellen Allardice, Maria Vargas (minutes)	
Apologies:	Alan van Hek, Jason Loh, Peter Vincent	

1. Fr. Norbert opened the meeting at 7.30pm with a prayer.
2. Fr. Norbert welcomed all attending.
3. The minutes of the previous meeting held on 20th March 2018 were agreed.

4. New Parish Centre

An application for a loan of some £500,000 was put forward to the Trustees of the Diocese at yesterday's meeting. This sum will be needed to pay for the new build, in addition to £300,000 which is allocated from the Growing in Faith scheme. Some parishioners may want to contribute a "one off" donation towards the project, or may decide to pledge the same amount as they currently give to "Growing in Faith" once the agreed 5 year term is finished, but this would be specifically towards the cost of building the new parish centre. Other fundraising events will have to be organised to help pay back the loan.

It is hoped that the new Parish Centre will be completed close to the centenary of Welwyn Garden City. A team of parishioners will be needed to contribute to the launch and promotion of the new Parish Centre.

We do not know the exact date of closure of the current parish centre, while we await the decision of the Trustees of the Diocese. During the time without a parish centre, alternative venues will be considered, possibly the Salvation Army Hall or Woodhall Community Centre for important dates such as First Holy Communion preparation sessions and the African Mass.

5. 'Adoremus' – National Eucharistic Pilgrimage and Congress

The Bishops of England and Wales are holding a National Eucharistic Pilgrimage and Congress in Liverpool on 7th-9th September 2018. Eucharistic Congresses are gatherings of clergy, religious and laity which promote an awareness of the central place of the Eucharist in the life and mission of the Church. Participants will engage in a series of sessions focusing on different dimensions of the Eucharist and the daily celebration and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Twelve places have been allocated for the three parishes. The three Parish Finance Committees have agreed that transport and accommodation will be covered by the parishes. Fr. Tom has arranged a coach and accommodation close to the centre. Fr. Norbert said that this will be an investment in the life of the parishes, and will help to spread a deeper understanding of the Blessed Sacrament. It is hoped that attendees will come back empowered to act on what they have experienced. Twelve people have been chosen to go and their names have been given to the Cardinal. We hope that their experience after attending the weekend will enrich their spiritual life and in turn that they will contribute to the life of the parish, a sense of "Sending Forth".

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6. World Meeting of Families

Dublin, Ireland, has been chosen by Pope Francis to host the next World Meeting of Families from 21-26 August 2018, guided by the theme "The Gospel of the Family: Joy for the World".

Held every three years, this major international event brings together families from across the world to celebrate, pray and reflect upon the central importance of marriage and the family as the cornerstone of our lives, of society and of the Church. Key issues to be discussed will be drawn from "Amoris Laetitia" which is an apostolic exhortation by Pope Francis in 2016 addressing the pastoral care of families.

The Pope will attend the Festival of Families on Saturday, 25th August and celebrate Mass in Phoenix Park on Sunday, 26th August. Fr. Norbert hopes to attend sessions being held on 22nd August to 24th August.

Prayer cards have been created in association with this event, and it is planned to distribute one card to each household within the parish for people to recite the prayer daily during the summer, either together as a family, or individually.

7. Young People and Discernment of Vocation

The Synod of Bishops takes place in Rome from 3rd to 28th October 2018. The theme will be Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment.

Fr Norbert summarised a presentation given by Fr Stephen Wang, which highlighted the issues and priorities of the young people today. In order to engage with young people in the parish, members were asked to think of ways to help young people to feel a part of the parish, with a view to considering the future of the Church and how we might promote vocations to the priesthood.

As it is likely that there will be a shortage of priests in the future, leaving it to chance is no longer an option.

There is much material available on the internet, as well as a "vocations app" which allows people to work through a series of questions about vocation without fear of commitment before the young person is ready.

Also, having a noticeboard at the back of each of the three churches, with new and regularly changed material regarding courses and workshops would provide food for thought for anyone thinking about the religious life.

A storyboard or collage of pictures highlighting the work of Fr Mark Connolly, 50 years a priest and the first one ordained from Welwyn Garden City, would be a good starting point.

8. AOB

Considering the mix of Parish Council members, while continuity is very important it is also good to invite new people to join to provide a greater diversity. It is hoped that some participants from the Adoremus congress may join in the future.

It was reported that the Transport to Mass scheme is working well, and the Bereavement Group will be shortly sending invitations out for those recently bereaved to join the group for the November service.

9. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the Open Parish meeting will be **Tuesday 18th September at 7.45pm** which would provide an opportunity to report back from the Eucharistic Congress. Also to be considered would be provision for parish events for the year whilst the new hall is being built.

8. Closing Prayer

Fr. Norbert thanked everyone for coming and the meeting closed at 8.40pm with a prayer.

