

Minutes of St Mary, St John Bosco & St Edward's
Pastoral Parish Council Inaugural Meeting
held on Thursday 5th June 2025

- 1) Fr John opened the meeting with a prayer.
- 2) **Those present:** Fr John; Theresa Wheeliker (Chair); Mitchell Ekwevugbe (Vice-Chair); Hilari Chetwood (Secretary); Keith Betteridge; Ann Clarke; Genny Hickey; Helen Ladkin; Lynne Ryan
- 3) **Apologies received from:** Melissa Furtado; Tom Mendes; Theresa Mendes

Approval of Minutes of Meeting held on 6th March 2025

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

Information on the revised PPC Constitution

- Father John thanked all the members of the previous PPC for their service and commitment
- He then read the Diocesan Constitution for a PPC which we are adopting.
 - He explained the Diocesan canonical guidance.
 - The pastor is fully accountable for all happenings in the parish, so the PPC may not take responsibility for decisions or dictate to the pastor.
 - The pastor may take advice from members of the PPC based on their skills and experience, but all decisions are the responsibility of the pastor alone.
- The role of the PPC is to:
 - Assist the pastor in his leadership role.
 - Assess adequately the needs of the parish.
 - Advise on building a sense of community.
 - Advise on developing programmes.
- All members confirmed that they had received a copy of the Constitution.

Actions arising from the previous meeting:

- **Update on the amalgamation:**
 - Fr John reported that we are too late for our amalgamation to go before the Council of Priests next week. We will have to wait for the next one, but there are more going forward than ours, so there may be an extraordinary meeting before then.
 - The extra evidence we required was the questionnaire that went out a couple of weeks ago. It was reported that we have received 15 responses.
- Summarised responses from the questionnaire:
 - They were, generally, positive.
 - There were a couple of questions about maintaining the identity of each community.
 - Several said that we have to move forward in unity in Christ.
- Reflections by PPC members:
 - Some, mainly older parishioners, are still afraid of change.
 - Change and evolution is a natural dynamic. Nothing is static.

- Some are still hurting following Covid.
- There has been a major population change over recent years.
- Some groups have their own cultural communities.
- Integration and diversity should give us strength.
- The seeds are there !!!
- Positive points:
 - Many are using the various Mass times to suit their needs.
 - Joint Safeguarding allows those in ministries to serve all three communities.

ACTION:

- Moving forward:
 - We can acknowledge how people feel as many big changes are out of our hands.
 - Identify concerns and decide how we are going to address them.
 - Minutes of recent Finance committee meetings need to be handed to Theresa.
 - The cover sheet needs to be added by Theresa.

Fr John thanked Teresa for putting all the paperwork together.

Review of, and discussion of, reports previously submitted to the meeting:

1: Catechesis, evangelisation and propagation of the Gospel.

- **Children's Liturgy:** Numbers of children attending, both at St Mary's and St Edward's, continue to be high. More and more families are attending Mass on a regular basis. There are also good numbers of children at St John Bosco, even though there is not a Children's Liturgy facility.
- **1st Holy Communion:** The children who have been attending the programme will be making their 1st Holy Communion over the coming weekend. For the first time, all the children will do this at a regular weekend Mass. Parishioners have been warned that numbers could be very high at St Mary's at 11.00am, so they might prefer to attend the 6.00pm Mass. Brendan has again been asked to set up the overflow screen in the hall to assist with seating.
- **Confirmation:** The pre-Confirmation candidates from last year still meet on the 1st Wednesday of every month. A meeting will be held soon for prospective Confirmation catechists to plan the next stage of the programme.
- **RCIA:** This programme is continuing with Mystagogy sessions for those who were received at Easter. In addition, we have four new people who have shown interest in learning more about the faith, and who are joining the programme.

ACTIONS:

- A date for a meeting of prospective Confirmation catechists to be agreed and announced.

2. Liturgy, and the spiritual life of the Parish:

- **Liturgy:** Fr John reminded us that from Pentecost, this coming Sunday, until St Mary's Patronal Feast, Our Lady's Birthday, on 8th September, the regular life of the church continues.
- **St Mary's Church birthday:** On 6th July St Mary's will celebrate 120 years since it was founded. It was suggested that a special Mass and party on 6th July could be the launch of a birthday year. Various others ideas were put forward:
 - Running a parish pilgrimage to Walsingham.
 - Purchasing mementos of the occasion to sell. Eg: pens; keyrings.

- Peter Kelly will be asked to update the history of the church.
- Ask people to bring in photos from events in the past to create a picture board in the church.
- **Spiritual:**
 - Several people have asked about starting a Rosary group. It was suggested it could meet at each church in rotations to allow maximum people to attend.
 - Some people have asked about holding Adoration at St Edward's.

ACTIONS:

- A group of people to meet to plan the birthday celebrations.
- Check in with Peter to see if he would like any assistance.
- Notices to go out in the bulletin informing Parishioners about the plans, and to request photos for a picture board.
- Mementos to be ordered

3. Pastoral care, safeguarding, community activities:

- **Extraordinary Ministry:** Fr John reported that new people have agreed to be extraordinary ministers.
- **SVP:** Fr John reported that had a visit from a representative of the SVP to investigate the possibility of relaunching the SVP across the Parish. Fr John has been in contact with those members of the Parish who were involved in the previous group. The representative will speak at masses over the weekend of 21st/22nd June, and a notice about this will be in the bulletin this weekend.
- **Fr John absence from the Parish:** Fr John informed us that he will be at the clergy conference from the 10th – 12th of June inclusive, and will be on retreat from the 23rd – 25th June inclusive.
- **Safeguarding:** Hilari reported that several new DBS applications have been sent off the Diocese. We are awaiting the outcome. Some are due for renewal soon, so forms will be given to those affected.
- **Community:**
 - The strawberry tea is still scheduled to be held on Saturday 13th June in St John Bosco hall. Fliers have been handed out to all parishioners.
 - An international food day was scheduled to be held at St Edward's but, as Julie is awaiting her operation this is on hold at the moment.
 - St Edward's summer fayre will be held on 28th June in St Edward's hall. Raffle tickets will be on sale soon.

ACTIONS:

- DBS application to be completed for potential extraordinary ministers.
- DBS renewal forms to go out to those who registrations are soon due for renewal.
- The SVP information to go into the bulletin.

4. Ecumenical relationships:

- **Churches together, South Wigston:** We were informed that the joint service with hymns and readings from each church in the area, will take place on Sunday 29th June in the Congregational church, starting at 4.00pm. The choir will be choosing and leading our hymn. People are encouraged to come and support this event, especially as the other churches are greatly in need of support and encouragement.

ACTION:

- Put a notice about the Churches Together event in the newsletter.

5. Parish admin: finance and buildings:

- **Mission Enabling Fund:** Fr John gave us the most recent update on the Mission Enabling Fund Initiative being implemented by the Diocese following the visit by the Company rep. A wide-ranging discussion took place around the issues involved.
 - A letter will be sent to the Parish → they will create a census → this will provide us with a database of parishioners, which could be useful for other issues.
 - Expecting the Priest to interview individuals asking for pledges is tantamount to spiritual abuse according to many in the Deanery.
 - Fr John informed us that the rep told him if we did not meet our target, the balance would be taken from our account. He pointed out that we were 'invited' to take part. It is not an 'obligation'. That approach would bankrupt us.
- **Finance:** The finance committee reported that over the last financial year St Edward's raised £38,000, and St Mary's & St John Bosco raised £97,000. Following the high level of expenses incurred by St Mary & St John Bosco over the year, ie: the fire door, and the improvement and separation works on St John Bosco Presbytery, that part of the parish made a £13,000 loss over the year. Despite that, the increased giving across the parish is amazingly good.
- **Buildings:**
 - **St John Bosco presbytery:** We were informed that the new meter needs a serial number. A meeting is due to be held with the lettings rep on Saturday with a view to putting the building on the market.
 - **Security:** Fr John has had meetings with two CCTV companies following the break-ins at St Mary's. ADT would put a monitor in the Sacristy. The Verisure rep was a salesman and was adamant we would have to have a package which included things we do not need. Tony had recommended two more companies, and Fr John had sourced another one. We are waiting to hear from them.
 - **Quota:** Because of increased numbers at the Masses, this has gone up by nearly 50%. The quota should be 16% of giving. Some parishes have reported more that this being taken, so the Finance team are keeping a watchful eye.

ACTIONS:

- Continue to bring the letting of St John Presbytery to a satisfactory conclusion.
- Source and install CCTV that meets our needs.

Final prayer: Mitchell closed the meeting with a prayer and Fr John gave us a blessing.

Next meeting: Thursday 24th July; 7.00pm; Sat Mary's hall.