**Parish of St Francis of Assisi, Ascot**

**Parish Pastoral Council Meeting**

**23rd April 2019**

**MINUTES**

**Present** Father Kevin

Philip MacDonald (Chair)

Tony Berkeley

Kate Camp

Sarah Chidede to speak about refugee project

**Apologies** Anne Scowcroft (resigned due to move away from the Parish)

Jonathan Kasinski

Sue Roche

**Not present** Paul Worthington (absent through illness)

**1) Gospel Reading and Formation**

* **FrK** presented the gospel of John and the story of ‘doubting Thomas’

**2) Minutes**

* Agreed from previous meeting and displayed on the noticeboard in the Narthex and on the website

**3) Parish Priest’s report**

* **FrK** reported satisfaction with how the Lent/Holy Week period went. The Lenten programme of four talks on the Gospels were well attended and **PMcD** commented on the success of their format, with the break in between discussions. The Holy Week liturgies went well and **FrK** made mention of the good work of the altar servers across this period.
* **Fr K** raised the question of the age profile of those attending the Children’s Stations of the Cross on Good Friday and the need to consider how to pitch it correctly given the number of older as well as younger children.
* With regard to readers, recruitment via the sign-up board was seen to have been successful.
* **FrK** updated the Council that the installation of the new window was delayed from 24/4 by a week.

**4) Refugees**

* **SC** presented the opportunity for the Parish to provide practical support to a refugee family through a two-year sponsorship scheme.
* In order to apply for this the Parish would need to raise a minimum of £9,000 and commit to providing suitable accommodation (with its own front door access).
* Once this were in place, the Diocese would then make an application to the Home Office to ‘match’ the Parish with a suitable refugee family (mainly those from Syrian refugee camps). The Parish would then support and sponsor the family over two years to enable them to establish an independent future.
* **SC** and the Council agreed that this would require whole parish support in order to raise the required funding. This funding would need to be sourced not through second collections or from the centre, but from wider appeals through local schools etc.
* **SC** clarified that other Parishes in the area were being approached and may be interested in forming a partnership. Maidenhead Parish has already expressed an interest in supporting the scheme and St Josephs in Bracknell is due to be approached (**SC** to find out when).
* FrK reminded the Council of the Holy Father’s prompt to reach out, whilst all acknowledged the commitment and responsibility of sponsoring a family within the Parish and the potential practical difficulties.
* The Council agreed in principle support for the scheme, contingent on proceeding in partnership either with other local schools/churches of other denominations or, preferably, alongside one or two other local parishes.
* **SC** to confirm date of presentation of the scheme to St Josephs. In the meantime, **PMcD** to discuss the scheme informally with other contacts within the Bracknell parish to gauge levels of potential interest and support.

**5) A.O.B**

* **TB** raised the importance of keeping focus on the youth of the Parish. PMcD to put this on the agenda for the next meeting.
* **TB** highlighted the Million Minutes Award to celebrate young people. **TB** to pass the information onto **JK** to pursue. Further information is available at [www.millionminutes.org/awards](http://www.millionminutes.org/awards).
* **PMcD** confirmed that he has booked the school hall for the Patronal Feast dates. He and SR due to email all heads of Parish groups to introduce the idea and gauge initial interest.

**6) Next meetings**

* Tuesday 14th May: Meeting to plan Parish Celebration