

St. Marie's Parish Pastoral Council

Minutes of meeting held Wednesday 6th October 2020
Via 'Zoom' at 7:00pm

Present:

Leandro Martins (chair)
Niall Corroon (secretary)
Fr. Christopher Posluszny
Candida Calvert
Josip Korbar
Charlie Currier
Mark Linfitt
Eileen Maher

Guest:

Onesmus Nyale
Joshua Glicklich

Apologies:

Carol Auma

Opening Prayer: The opening prayer was kindly led by Charlie Currier

Joshua Glicklich introduced himself as a guest – he is the current President of the University Catholic Society, which covers both the University of Sheffield and Sheffield Hallam University. He has worked as an altar server and contributes to stewarding at the 8am Sunday mass.

This meeting was arranged to discuss the ongoing situation around Cathedral stewarding, and management of stewards. Prior to discussing this at length, the PPC were updated on recent developments:

- We were sorry to hear that Clare Campbell, the Cathedral's Health and Safety Representative for many years, has decided to step down from her role. We were pleased to discover that Ged Jenkinson has agreed to take this role on, and will be having training provided by Clare prior to formally starting. Nonetheless, the PPC wished to express their enormous gratitude for the hard work provided by Clare, over many years but especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, in order to help ensure the Cathedral is a safe environment for visitors and parishioners.
- Charlie Currier, Onesmus Nyale and Carol Auma have worked together to help produce cards for the Big Thank-You celebration this year. These contain a supportive message of thanks, and a prayer on the reverse. A banner marking the feast of St. John Henry Newman has also been produced and put on display in the narthex. The mass of Thursday October 9th is to be streamed via Shalom Media, with Newman's relics on display on the altar.

Prior to this PPC meeting, Candida Calvert (who is currently managing the weekday and weekend stewards) sent out a comprehensive breakdown of steward availability. Overall, more stewards are joining, with a current total of 40 stewards. However, some stewards have had to leave their roles due to university commitments. There are a total of 29 stewarding slots to fill, and additional masses (such as First Holy Communions) have required ad-hoc slots for which additional stewards have had to be recruited. At the time of the meeting, some slots were still unfilled, with Saturday lunchtime the most in need. Charlie Currier offered to advertise for more stewards via Facebook, but candidates would need to be suitable for the role, without significant underlying health conditions etc.

There has been lots of appreciation of stewards voiced by parishioners, and the PPC remarked that one of the benefits of this new structure was perhaps an increased sense of community. Notices in the bulletin also try and make sure the work of stewards and cleaners is appreciated.

Going forward, there is still a plan to establish a WhatsApp group for Cathedral stewards. The PPC realised that upcoming half terms and the Christmas break may be difficult, as (depending on local restrictions) many stewards will be visiting family. Joshua Glicklich kindly offered to recruit some temporary Christmas stewards from within the student Catholic community – many of whom are overseas students and may be staying in Sheffield over the winter.

The PPC discussed how the celebration of Christmas at St. Marie's might look different this year. We may need to hold additional Vigil masses on Thursday 24th December. We will also need to consider how many masses will be filmed by Shalom Media, as this slightly affects our capacity. We planned to discuss in further detail over the next few weeks, with staff from Shalom Media.

The PPC discussed whether stewarding should be opened to those over 70. Currently, those over 70 do not steward as they are at generally increased risk of developing a more severe infection from COVID-19. The PPC opted to see how the lockdown situation develops – it may be that quieter shifts could be covered by the over-70s if they are accepting of the risks and happy to sign a disclaimer.

Other Business

The most recent 'after-mass chat' on Sunday was better attended, at the new time of 3pm. More parishioners have been encouraged to attend in the future. Josip Korbar will continue to organise these, but suggested a regular notification via the newsletter to recruit more parishioners to attend.

Mass via the phone is not being picked up, but is still a functioning option for those who might wish to use it. Leandro Martins remarked that measures like these are still important, as we need to do what we can to reach out to the lonely, vulnerable and elderly – even if that is a minority.

Fr. Stephen is leaving St. Marie's on Thursday 15th October, and Fr. Martin Clayton will be moving to St. Marie's to cover some masses. Eileen Maher has kindly offered to write cards of thanks to Fr. Stephen, to Sheila Verity and to Clare Campbell to thank them for their work and contribution, on behalf of the PPC. She will also assemble a gift of flowers and chocolates for Sheila and Clare, on behalf of the PPC.

The closing prayer was kindly led by Charlie Currier

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday 28th October 2020 at 7:00pm, via Zoom