

St Simon Stock Catholic Parish, Walderslade

Parish Pastoral Council Meeting

Thursday 26 November 2023 at 6.30 pm

Present

Fr Pawel (Fr P), Deacon Martin (Dcn M), James Carmichael (JC), Tanya Wilkins (TW), Christine Flood (CF), Teresa Daley (TD), April Redding (AR), Anthony Seidu (AS), Lydia Burchell (LB)

Apologies

Bernadette Long, Helen Appleby

Opening Prayer

Deacon Martin led us in an opening prayer

Previous Minutes (26 June 2023)

The previous Minutes were agreed.

Christine Flood requested that her email address be amended as she believed that they were going to a previous school email address. JC asked if TW would be able to do this.

The garden area was discussed at the previous Team meeting. Obtaining a digger had been discussed and AR confirmed that she had asked her neighbour who was able to assist in obtaining the digger but would not be able to provide a driver. A driver would need to be sought. JC and Fr P discussed the garden area, we were now entering winter months where the garden would become dormant and so it was agreed to leave the garden area until Spring 2024.

JC asked if Fr P had reviewed the parish directory and Fr P confirmed that he had and put it on to the Parish website.

The windows in the Parish Hall have now been replaced.

A contactless payment machine has been placed in the Porch area for Parish donations.

JC asked about the discussions surrounding the land close to St Benedict's and Fr P said that this is not a priority.

They had been notified that Medway Council are looking at exemptions accessing roads where there are schools in the mornings and evenings. JC asked if there was any news on this and Fr P said that it had gone to second consultation and they have heard no more. The list of schools affected had changed some had been removed and some had been added. If it goes ahead there will be an opportunity to apply for exceptions. Discussions around the table ensued as to the pros and cons of such parking and dropping off restrictions. Fr P was worried that there could be problems with funerals because he would be unable to give Medway Council a full list of all the car registration numbers.

Reports and updates from members of Parish Pastoral Council

Union of Catholic Mothers

Teresa Daley reported that the UCM had recently inducted two new members, April Redding and Patricia Pike at their anniversary Mass. The Diocese President had attended and had commented very positively on the UCM at St Simon Stock Parish. The reception went very well.

The UCM organised the lunch for the Deanery meeting providing coffee and selection of lunch including lasagne, chilli, wine and cheese. Fr P thanked the UCM very much for providing the lunch.

Eight members of the UCM went on a day trip to Ascot on the first day attended by King Charles III.

They are very much hoping to attend to annual trip to Walsingham. This is a National Guild trip, next year being led by the Archdiocese of Southwark.

They would be selling quiz sheets at Masses on the 11 and 12 November, 18 and 19 November. The 29 November would be the last day for entries and the results announced on 2 December 2023.

TD mentioned that there used to be a Christmas Dinner organised by Breda D'Silva to The Friars, Aylesford. This has not been organised since pre-Covid, on the last occasion LB had helped Breda organise. LB would speak to The Friars to see if there is any availability.

Bereavement Support Group

TD spoke about the Bereavement Support Group. There are four leaders and it is led by two people on each occasion. They have recently reviewed an extremely positive review. The Group is held on the second Tuesday of the month.

TD at this meeting was standing in for Helen Appleby but asked if she could attend the meeting once a year as a representative of the Bereavement Support Group. This was agreed.

JC thanked TD.

Liturgy Committee

Deacon Martin spoke on behalf of the Liturgy Committee.

They had a Mass for the sick and housebound which was fairly well attended.

The Christmas Masses are planned. There will be no 9 am on Christmas Eve as it is a Sunday. Instead there will be the usual 11 am Sunday Mass, Christmas Eve 6 pm Mass, 9 pm Polish Mass and Midnight Mass. Christmas Day there will be 9 am and 11 am Masses.

Social Committee

Tanya Wilkins spoke on behalf of the social committee.

There is a meeting of the social committee tomorrow evening (27 October 2023). They will be talking about the summer fair and organising the Christmas Fair, which is planned for Saturday 25 November 2023.

They are hoping to organise the Christmas Raffle Hampers and will be requesting unwanted gifts and bottles.

Finance

Parish Accounts

Main Account	£2,500.00
Development Fund	£28,429.01
First Reserve	£35,575.32
100 Club	£11,518.95

The balance of the new windows in the Parish Hall is to be paid.

TW and Sandra Rocco attended a Finance and Gift Aid Conference.

There are six Parishes including St Simon Stock, Walderslade, having trouble with the new Finance software. It appears to be an IT issue.

JC thanked TW for all her support for the collectors. There are now three teams of counters who started in September and there are rotas of collectors at all Sunday Masses.

Knights of St Columba

Anthony Seidu spoke on behalf of the Knights.

The Grand Knight initiated a Rosary every Tuesday during October which is being led by Deacon Martin.

They are hoping to organise a Mass of Brothers in November.

At the recent buffet for Fr Pawel's birthday people spoke to AS about the International Food Evening that used to be held in May. AS is hoping to reinstate this event.

They are presently meeting every third Saturday on Zoom but are hoping to start face to face meetings very soon.

Catechesis

Dcn Martin is a Parish Lead of Catechesis and he is our link with the Deanery Mentor.

Dcn M needs to lead some catechist sessions for all catechists in the Parish. To support the catechists and link to the Deanery.

All Sacramental programmes are ongoing. First Holy Communion, Confirmation, RCIA and Baptism.

There will be a new Baptism course running from January. The Baptism course runs four times a year.

They have six Confirmation candidates which is a good group of young people and hopefully there will be good interaction.

There are over 20 First Holy Communion candidates. All First Holy Communion candidates must be attending Sunday Mass every week.

The RCIA programme has been changed to a two year programme. There are three people on the RCIA course and one person who Fr Pawel is seeing.

Dcn Martin told the Team that they had a Confirmation Candidate Confirmed last Sunday at St Francis Parish, Maidstone.

Fr Pawel

Fr Pawel reported that the windows have been replaced in the Parish Hall. Fr P is now looking at quotations for decorating the inside of the Parish Hall because some damage has occurred during the replacement of the windows. There is a possibility of changing the blinds if the funds allow this.

Fr P has also been starting to obtain quotes for the driveway and car park. This is a large job which requires major groundworks and relaying of the car park. Fr P has had one quote of approx. £22,000 but is seeking further quotations. This is a large job which is required to be done when the school is closed and at the convenience of the Parish.

Parish Plan

Fr Pawel showed us a new initiative from the Archdiocese - parish plan for the three areas of Evangelisation, Catechesis and Formation.

There are three areas Catechesis, Formation and Evangelisation. The Diocese believes that these are the areas that we need to grow the Parish.

The Parish is required to upload the plans to the Diocese and this will then give the Diocese a whole image each of the Parishes. It will give an indication of what is working in different parishes and what is not.

Once we upload a Plan we are able to make ongoing amendments or changes as necessary.

The Parish is strong on Catechesis and it is hopeful that we will be able to upload our Catechesis Plan before Christmas.

Fr Pawel said that we need to find and appointed Parish Leaders from Formation and Evangelisation.

The Deanery Mentor position for formation is vacant.

Any Other Business

TD said that the Adoration Mass on 13 September 2023 was lovely and she was able to meet other Adorers.

Dcn Martin reconfirmed that he is a member of Caritas. It was requested that each Deanery have a Caritas Parish and Dcn M volunteered St Simon Stock as he is the Deacon.

Dcn M spoke about the Clothing Bank. He has further investigated the situation. Everything is provided, all that is needed from us is the site. They can either pay us a small amount per kilo of clothes or a small amount of rent for the ground.

The only questions to find out are how often will it be emptied and when?

TD asked if new albs were required for the new altar servers. Fr P and Dcn M confirmed that we were fine at the moment.

Next year at the Altar Servers Rally in May 2024 the Parish would like to invest in Guild of St Stephen Medals. Deacon Martin has been asked to attend the Mass. Dcn M will organise a training day.

Date of Next Meeting Thursday 1 February 2023

Closing Prayer

Fr P closed the meeting with a prayer.