

**PARISH OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD
ST TERESA OF THE CHILD JESUS CORE GROUP
MINUTES
8th March 2011**

Present: Fr. Laurence Quin–Morris, Fr. Andrew Moss, Alex Hunter (chair), Pamela Schwenk, Claire Franklin, Clare Briffa, David Carter, Liz Braines (minutes.)

Apologies for absence: None

Alex Hunter welcomed Fr. Andrew to our core group meeting and the team introduced themselves.

Matters arising from previous minutes: What progress has been made on merging the three finance committees? Fr. Laurence explained that the three heads of each finance committee were due to meet but there is unlikely to be a merging into one for the next year or so. There are still many issues to resolve before this can happen. The parish has about 8 different accounts and each parish runs their finances slightly differently. Gift aid also has to be brought into line for all three churches. No timetable has yet been set for merge.

The issue of bequests was also raised. If a potential benefactor wished for their bequest be spent in a particular church after the finance teams merge, it will need to be made clear by the benefactor. Fr. Andrew offered to look into the legal implications of this in both canon and civil law. It was agreed that transparency is needed by both the church and potential benefactors. It was felt that once we have one finance committee all monies are to be shared fairly by all three churches unless otherwise openly specified.

Action: Fr. Andrew to look into legal position regarding legacies and bequests.

Feedback from members of the parish:

Questions were asked from a member of the congregation about what the purpose of the core team was and who should she now approach to 'organise things and get things sorted out'.

Core team is NOT a replacement for the old parish council. The role of the core team is to feed information between the clergy, PPC, other churches and provide ideas for vision and unity in the parish. Our role is also to provide a strong and welcoming Catholic presence in Merstham. It is not the core teams' role to organise events in each church or to replicate the parish council. Regarding the number of masses held each week, the clergy did point out that often during the week due to training, annual leave and other responsibilities the clergy undertook such as deanery issues that needed to be attended to at short notice, school governor roles and urgent hospital calls. Our clergy are doing the best they could with the team that was available. It was also suggested that a team to organise social events parish wide would be a positive step. Members of the congregation could volunteer to form one.

Garden Opening: St Teresa's garden would be open on the afternoon of 17th July between 2pm and 4pm. This is to be advertised in newsletters as open to all. Offers of cakes for serving during the afternoon would be most welcome.

It was also suggested that a summer concert in June in the garden take place. Core team members and clergy are happy for this to go ahead. Once date decided this can be

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advertised in the newsletter and events sheet. Tickets to be on sale at St Teresa after masses and can be requested by telephone from the other churches.

Music. No musicians volunteered their services during the talent audit. However it was suggested we have a wider pool of musicians. It was suggested that maybe regular musicians who attended mass on a Saturday evening could occasionally volunteer to play the organ. Fr. Andrew suggested contacting 2 or 3 key musicians in each church to discuss a parish wide collaboration of musical accompaniment at mass.

Roman Missal. Team was asked what sort of parish catechises was going to take place for the congregation on the new translation before it comes into use in September, given that all parishes are supposed to be doing this before the translation comes into use as an opportunity to deepen our faith and understanding of scripture and liturgy. All the clergy team have now had training and in service days on the new wording for parish masses. Bishop Kieran will be holding open meetings at Horsham, Epsom and Bexhill between 15th and 24th March 2011 and all are welcome to attend. Details are in the newsletter and on website. Our clergy team will be speaking about the changes over coming months during Mass. Details will also be in newsletters and on parish website. When the changes come into place the parish will provide Mass cards with the appropriate responses.

Merstham will still use missals for the reading as these are currently unchanged. When the readings are revised, a decision will be made on whether to order a set of new missals or not. As Redhill and Reigate do not use missals a parish wide decision will be made in due course. McRimmon have published a very informative booklet entitled 'Understanding the revised mass.' It was suggested a few be purchased for people to buy after mass.

A query was raised about the First Holy Communion booklets catechists use with the children training to take their First Holy Communion. The responses the children are taught are the current ones. Next years' catechists will need work books with new responses to learn. Fr. Laurence promised to look into this. Fr. Andrew suggested a series of talks & Fr. Laurence suggested taking this up with the new Cornerstone programme.

Parish 2nd anniversary. There are currently no plans to hold a party for the 2nd anniversary of the parish. As the parish anniversary takes place on Pentecost Sunday it was decided that the bidding prayers for that weekend across all three churches should reflect on the anniversary. Redhill are holding their First Holy Communion masses that weekend.

The issue of noisy children was again brought up – especially during notices. It was suggested that notices should be kept to a minimum and this was heartily endorsed! People should be directed to website and newsletter for all notices. It was pointed out that children's behaviour is the parents' responsibility and not that of the priest to keep them under control.

Gift aid: PPC to take forward which churches need a gift aid drive. Merstham has a fairly high proportion of parishioners who gift aid.

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Fire marshals. It was suggested the welcomers be trained as fire marshals in case of evacuation. It was noted that one or two in Merstham were too elderly to be on an emergency response team, so it was suggested that a team be set up. A minimum of 2 fire marshals would be needed per Mass across the parish. Although no one was aware of any fire alerts in recent history, under health and safety legislation, fire marshals are required to assist in a calm and smooth evacuation the church in case of an emergency. They would also need to be aware of where all fire exits are and where to direct people out of the building for safe evacuation. Potential fire marshals should be fit, well and willing volunteers for role. No one should be forced to undertake this important safety post and full training must be given.

Altar servers. We are still chronically short of altar servers across the parish. Adults are very welcome to join the team. Fr. Andrew will write to parents of children currently taking their First Holy Communion to ask if their children might like to receive training in this ministry in September.

Children's Liturgy. It is going well. David will liaise with clergy and team to organise a children's mass, possibly in June on last Sunday of May half term. The possibility of a children's choir was raised.

The Parish is also still short on Eucharistic Ministers. Pamela felt that sometimes 4 chalices were required at 11am Mass at St Teresa – currently we do not have enough ministers on the rota to cover 4 chalices regularly.

Action: All Eucharistic ministers to be made known to all church roster planners so their services could be better utilised across the parish. Pamela Schwenk currently organised the reader and Eucharistic ministers for Merstham.

Core Group: Core group members to serve a 3 year term of office. 2 members will (possibly) come off Merstham core group in June. Names for new core team members will be requested from the parish soon. The suggestion was again brought up the issue of election to core team by the parish. However, clergy team reserve the right to select appropriate replacements for core team from the nominations.

CRB checks: New Eucharistic ministers have been CRB checked. CRB checks required for existing Eucharistic ministers, adult altar servers and children's liturgists or evidence of current CRB certificate will need to be seen by Jean Tucker, parish safeguarding officer.

Core group received an item that there were no hosts in the tabernacle one Wednesday to take to a local old people's home for communion. Hosts had to be collected from Redhill. This is an issue for liaison with clergy and not a core group issue.

Diocesan training days: A request was received that bereavement training take place in the evening or on a weekend. People in full time employment cannot attend training days during the week.

Request for Ash Wednesday Mass at 12.15 in Merstham was received for next year. Although Holy Days of Obligation masses are listed as 12.15, Ash Wednesday is not a Holy

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Day of Obligation. (NB 8pm mass on Ash Wednesday was very well attended at St Teresa this year).

Mass times during the week will be likely to change. Where possible, 2 Masses per day will take place across the parish. These will be at different times of day so one priest can, when necessary, preside over both Masses.

A request was received on how to make the influx of Asian families welcome. Where possible welcomers to (and already have) make them welcome. Many of the congregation have made efforts already to make all new members welcome. However it is often noted that many families often turn up at the very last minute (and sometimes late), sit or stand at the back and often leave before mass is finished. We will do what we can to be inclusive.

PPC: Friday 18th March

Next Core group meeting: Tuesday 14th June. 7.30pm. Corner House, Merstham.