**Parish of St Francis, Ascot**

**Parish Pastoral Council Meeting**

**13th November 2018**

**(Meeting postponed from 6th November)**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Father Kevin (FrK)

Sue Roche (SR)

Philip MacDonald (PMcD/Chair)

Tony Berkeley (TB)

Kate Camp (KC)

Jonathan Kasinski (JK)

Ann Scowcroft (AS)

**Apologies:** Paul Worthington (PW)

**Not present**: Dermot Briody (DB)

1. Fr Kevin opened the meeting with the Gospel reading for Sunday 18th November on the theme of the Apocalypse. Fr K highlighted the difficulty in not treating such readings as myth, but finding rational meaning, perhaps in seeing God’s Majesty behind decisions, whether International, National or Local.

1. **Minutes** PW’s apologies were recorded. The PPC conveyed all good wishes to PW for his continued treatment and progress. There was one update to the Minutes of 9th October: PMcD had spoken to Douai Abbey regarding a day retreat for the Confirmation group and has passed the contact details on to Ola B Morley. PMcD happy to help in any further way in organising transport etc.
2. **Confirmation Update.** SR provided update on behalf of OBM, that they are in contact with the team of catechists from last year to confirm participation. They are looking to pursue the plan for a retreat and are looking to see what content this could cover, to take on the delivery of some elements of the programmeand so trim the content delivered in Parish. FrK confirmed the new course will start mid-February with a note going out in the newsletter this week to invite eligible young people to an initial meeting on Saturday 15th December. Another round of Confirmations is likely to take place in 2020 too, to bring us in line with other Parishes in the area.

A discussion followed on how best to engage and continue contact with the young people in the upcoming Confirmation group and to better understand what the programme can give them. JK was invited to reflect on his own experience, which gave him a deeper spiritual understanding and appreciation of the power of prayer. KC suggested that young people need to be provided with the tools to present their case for being a Catholic, to equip them for discussions with their peers. Other faith groups go in to take Assemblies at Charters School, could FrK do the same? TB stressed the importance of following up with the Confirmation group. Could they be encouraged to feel the 5.30pm Saturday mass was ‘for them’, for example by inviting them to run refreshments after Mass?

PMcD suggested a reunion of the group one year on, which SR thought would work if it were built into the programme up front. PMcD suggested this work should be viewed as enhancing the Confirmation programme. FrK agreed, in the same way as RCIA adults joining the Church emphasise the period after joining as being as important, acceptance into the Church is just the beginning. Action: FrK to explore with OBM how these options might be built into the programme in advance of the 15th December meeting, and in the meeting with the catechists in January.  **Action: FrK**

1. **Parish Priest’s report**

FR K asked the Council for ideas on how to encourage people to volunteer for Parish activities. AS mentioned in her previous parish they held an ‘exhibition’, with representatives from all parish groups. The discussion on this led to agenda point 5.

1. **AGM/Open Evening.** PMcD suggested holding an event, ideally on the patronal feast, as a way of celebrating all the good things that go on in the parish and encouraging others to get involved. It would be a social occasion with parishioners invited to ‘bring a plate’, and an opportunity for parish groups to make representation of their activities and recruit new volunteers. TB suggested it as an opportunity to brainstorm suggestions/new ideas via a suggestions box/board. FrK said in a previous parish they published an annual booklet, reporting on parish activities and featuring one parish group each year. Perhaps our event could focus on one group presenting, with others providing brief updates? FrK confirmed that next year the feast of St Francis falls on a Friday, but that he could seek the Bishop’s permission to move it to the Saturday or Sunday and hold the event on that day. JK suggested the school hall might be an appropriate venue. The Council agreed to progress. PMcD to lead the organisation of the event, with the help of the Council.

**Action: PMcD/all**

1. **Visit from the Bishop.** FrK suggested that an appropriate occasion to invite the Bishop would be the installation/official dedication of the third new window in the Church. This is due to be installed in early 2019. PMcD to contact the Bishop’s office to establish availability.
2. **Next meeting.** It was agreed that the scheduled meeting on December 18th was not necessary (and rather close to Christmas) so the next meeting will be on **January 29th 2019.**

The meeting closed with a Prayer.