

Parish of St. Helen's Ongar & St. Margaret's Doddinghurst
20th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Parish Pastoral Council (PPC)
Date and time: 21st October 2020 18:00 to 20:00

Present

1. Father Emile **FE**
2. Bessem Njopa-Kaba **BNK**
3. Jenny Smith **JS**
4. Adrian Smith **AS**
5. Audrey McGill **AM**
6. Jane Gay **JG**
7. Chloe Rowles **CR**
8. Peggy Maxwell **PM**
9. Margaret Payne **MP**
10. Carol Terry **CT**
11. Anne Robertson **AR**
12. Charlette Mills **CM**
13. John Varellas **JR**
14. Betty Varellas **BR**
15. Lorraine Mitchell **LM**
16. Stanley Wrobel **SW**
17. Bernie Wrobel **BW**
18. Sheena MacKintosh **SM**

Apologies

Sue Fahey, Pauline MacFarlane

Secretary

BNK was present to take minutes as had been requested at previous PPC meetings.

AGM 1: Welcome and Opening Prayer

General air of genuine love and excitement as everyone came to grips with the modern day approach of video meetings, in our case using the Zoom application. It was great to see everyone's actual face. CR gave assistance to those who needed IT help. LM enquired if Brian would join and more time was given. Fr. Emile began the meeting with a prayer at 18:11

AGM 2: Minutes of last meeting AGM - 20 June 2019

The minutes were read by BW. They were deemed to accurate.

Signed Anne Robertson

Seconded Peggy Maxwell

AGM 3: Matters Arising:

1. It was noted that Sheena had been present at the last AGM.
2. Church light bulbs have been changed and this has resulted in a brighter atmosphere in the Church.
3. 150th Anniversary of St. Helen will still be revisited despite the pandemic putting a stop to all previous plans and hopes.

AGM 4: President's Report by Fr Emile Nkumu

Appendix A – attached for all to read.

AGM5: Chair's Report

- This was not read out as everyone had read it.
- It was confirmed that the old PPC had been dissolved and today's meeting had nine nominees tendered forward for voting.
- SW raised the point that that outgoing members had done so much and should really be commended for their devotion to the Parish and many thanks wished for them- Brian and all the rest.
- CR asked how names for nominees were drawn. FE replied that he took the initiative to select persons from and to reflect equally from both St Margaret and St Helen. He felt this was a better representation of the parish. CR felt it was difficult to vote for individuals who perhaps were not actually well known, as you might know a face but not their names. FE gave a brief description of the personalities. BW confirmed that of the six representatives, three would be from Ongar and three from Doddinghurst. FE responded that there were nine names and six would be elected. The nominees were shared on the screen and everyone was able to see the nominees.
- BW expressed deep regret and sadness that Brian S was no longer Chair or even part of the PPC anymore. Many others on the call echoed this sentiment. JG expressed a loss of Brian's calm and measured approach when difficulties arose and his sincere professionalism. LM wanted thanks to be noted for Brian steering the committee the last three years and when he stepping in to help despite a very busy work schedule. Sincere thanks indeed for Brian's commitment to this Parish especially from LM personally. SM added that Brian has supported very event that has been run by the parish and not only that but sometimes running it as well. His family have also given selflessly to the Parish for many many years. It is a tremendous loss for the Parish. CR also noted that Brian's family have really given a lot, Christmas, youth area will really feel their loss.
- BW brought up that those chosen for the committee must really have those attributes to keep people together in a positive way and proper Christian way.
- LM asked about the code of conduct in the report. All the hard work achieved so far should not be in vain and we risk being in a position to 'throw out the baby with the bath water'. There is a need to ensure that the parish moves forward together and is not controlled by one or two individuals who are stronger than the rest. That cannot really be what God wants for our parish. AR responded that FE asked her to reconcile disagreements between parties and the agreements there were actually, what was agreed with parties at the time, was in no danger of being left out or forgotten, and most importantly were intrinsic to the current PPC indeed. MP also expressed concern and AR assured everyone that they have been adopted. It was done with a few people and accepted. FE

backed this as well. They are noted below and had been adopted at the end of August:

- ❖ Heated discussions in relation to differences of opinion should not take place within the church (in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament).
 - ❖ Anyone with a concern of any nature should hold discussions outside of the church, to sort their difference in a calm, respectful and conciliatory manner.
 - ❖ If concerns remain and the issue has been unable to be resolved, they should speak to Father Emile quietly and in a confidential place.
 - ❖ At no time should anyone shout at another nor invade their personal space.
 - ❖ When a parishioner is meeting with Father Emile, others must respect their right to speak confidentially and not interrupt the conversation. All parishioners must respect this right and not linger or force themselves onto the meeting.
 - ❖ Tasks need to be shared out either informally or if necessary, a rota can be drawn up.
 - ❖ Everyone should feel welcome and involved, able to share their skills, talents, time and efforts as God designs.
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- CR brought up that with response to setting up a hub and shared an email, which gives people an opportunity to get a video care phone to assist in companionship. This will be shared via the newsletter as well erctd@essex.gov.uk. At the time of writing, this BNK has not share this on the newsletter, as you have to email and more exact details to be sent by CR.

AGM 6: Treasurers Report- to be circulated later

Rob Hattrell will send out a report after the PFC meeting next week. This will then be shared via email to all PPC members.

AGM 7: Nominations

- We managed to get through this despite the challenges of doing this remotely. The nominees were displayed for all to see. There were misunderstanding of were nominees were actually affiliated with but this was reconciled. The list of nominees is attached: Appendix B.
- All present were encouraged to vote for at least three members and at most six. Six members were voted and they were felt to equally represent both St Helen and St Margaret. These were AR, BW, CR, Denise Terry, Elaine D'Onofrio and Patrick Maher- who replaced SW (gallantly stepped down, as he is a spouse of BW). These votes were sent in privately via the 'chat' function and BNK compiled the votes. Everyone was very helpful and assisted each other with the technological challenges. The current PPC members will vote a Chair in due course.
- LM asked for her name to be taken off as she wanted to maintain impartiality and did not feel she could do that as a pastoral assistant to the clergy. This was actioned.
- It was noted that BW, CR and others had not been made aware that FE had put them up for nomination but they graciously accepted. PM brought up the salient point that perhaps there were attendees present who might want to be nominated- no one else volunteered.
- CT did bring up that in prior years this nomination and voting had been a more democratic process and expressed concern that the new Parish Council might not be up to the task. FE reminded that the constitution was merely a handbook for guidance- it is not essential to the running of

the Parish and many parishes had done away with a PPC. The only must was a Finance committee. FE wanted a smaller PPC and a fresh start for all. CT brought up aspects of evangelisation especially for St Margaret Hall. FE expressed understanding and said that was why sub committees were important to still maintain a love and passion for your parish and to assist as needed- everyone still participates in the parish. FE expressed a frustration that in his three years he has seen little evangelization and saw more concern for events and others were sidelined and he found it sad. The prayer group has been a great start. CT pointed that people needed encouragement and needed to be led not pushed. CR pointed that events held were a way of bringing the community together as well, which was seen as a major part of evangelisation. MP mentioned the Lenten lunches – a low-level community tapping means of evangelisation. Open the Book has also opened up in the Primary schools eyes of children to Christianity even if they do not end up as Catholics but still encounter and learn about God. FE agreed with this.

- MP brought up that a lady had wanted help from the priest during the Lockdown and had not received any help. No email had been sent to the Parish Office as these were always monitored. FE did not receive any phone message. MP would like to ensure that robust systems are in place for capturing people like that who need help. This is to be discussed as a
- AS expressed his thanks and had to go as there was a lot else he had to do. He was thanked for attending.
- LM thanked JS and Dolores for their amazing efforts with the First Holy Communion (FHC) children- promoting the Catholic faith during Covid and the lockdown, seeing the completion of programme successfully. That was a true example of practicing our faith and there was no need to cast out our nets too widely just by our own example. The FHC ministry is truly showing the faith. JS gave her thanks to everyone.
- CR brought up that we should be keeping the parishioners we have in terms of the recent upsets and St Helen has lost many parishioners. FE expressed that if anyone was uncomfortable, and had a car; they were most welcome to go where they felt comfortable, especially if they are unwilling to make amends with whosoever they have fallen out with. FE gave the opportunity for anyone who had a grievance to come and air it out and reconcile. If that cannot help then he cannot see how else as Parish Priest he can help. He did not want ill will spread with bad mutterings. CR pointed that many had spent a lifetime here and felt hard done by things that had happened. The truth was most important. A snowball effect of something happened. Her role in the H&S meeting were only to help to reopen the Church and issues were brought up.
- CR brought up an issue but neither FE nor AR were aware. CR suggested that she could speak with FE in private and after the meeting. PM reiterated this. BNK also supported this.

AGM 8: Date of Next Meeting and AOB

- Next Committee meeting is **Tuesday 17th November 18:30**. An agreement on the time to suit both CR and BNK with child commitments.
- Next PPC AGM is on **19th October 2021 18:30**.

AOB

1. Members of Old Committee : With our sincere gratitude

Brian Sainsbury- outgoing Chair,

Sue Fahey

Sue Muckleston

Audrey McGill

Carol Terry

Jane Gay

Lorraine Mitchell

Margaret Payne

Peggy Maxwell

Sheena MacKintosh

2. Elected to PPC

Doddinghurst Elaine D'Onofrio, Denise Terry, Bernie Wrobel

Ongar Chloe Rowles, Anne Robertson, Patrick Maher

FE would like to have **Christine Easter** added to the PPC as she was caring for her sick husband.

Ongar News- PM added that a group has been formed to review and edit publication of articles in the Ongar News. CM has been doing this on her own for the past three months. BW noted this was a good bit of evangelisation as well. **New members** will be contacted and their email address added to the circulation list. BNK will do this.

AGM 9: Closing Prayer

Fr. Emile closed the meeting with a prayer. Meeting ended at 20:00