

St. Joseph's Parish Council Meeting
Held in St. Joseph's Church - 7th September, 2008

Chairman: Fr. Ross Thompson. Eleven members attended.

Apologies - Eileen Gray and Margaret Dobson.

Fr. Ross welcomed the Committee and opened the Meeting with a prayer.

1. The Minutes of the last Meeting were read and approved.

Fr. Ross said that Fr. Lumley and Mrs. Cook had been thrilled with the marvellously welcoming community spirit here.

2. Reports from Organisations

The Ladies Group had nothing to report, as through the summer their activities had been mostly social.

Most of the group were involved in some activities in the Parish - Ministry of Holy Communion – in church and to the sick, Ministry of the Word, the Piety Stall, Flower teams, Cleaning teams, Refreshment teams, Candle money collection, etc.

SVP. There were nine members, only seven of whom were active. The SVP was 175 years old internationally. St. Joseph's Conference began sixty years ago in January, 1948. The Feast Day of St. Vincent de Paul is on 27th September, when Mass will be celebrated for the SVP by the Bishop in Our Lady's Church. This September is SVP Awareness Month, and the theme is "Who is My Neighbour". Lectern addresses were being given out to parishioners in the weekly Newsletter. National raffle tickets will go on sale on the first two weekends in October.

Children's Liturgy. There are twelve young children, and the group could do with some more help.

Ministers of Holy Communion. We have fourteen Eucharistic Ministers, and one more parishioner who has agreed to become a Minister, and hopefully more will follow. We are very short of Ministers of Holy Communion at the Saturday evening Mass.

Adult Formation. There is a Catechists Study Day on October 11th and the day is for any Catechist or Parishioner. There will be a different content to the new Catechist's Course in January, 2010. We have only three Catechists in the Parish and need more. It was pointed out that Catechists who work on Saturdays constantly miss out on these Courses, and this has been mentioned to the organisers.

Supporting Pastoral Ministry. Five people were going from St. Joseph's and a reminder of the date would be put in the Bulletin each month. Travelling the Border Lands - held to inform and discuss changes in the Diocese, and about the decline in the number of priests. There will be Meetings in Middlesbrough & Hull on Sat., 31st January, 09 and Sat., 7th February, 09. We are invited to bring a 'cluster' group from our own Parish. Fr. Ross would ask about the possibility of also having a Meeting in York. Adult Formation Courses We must decide which Courses we want to do and prioritise. Some Courses are already fully booked for the autumn. The Scripture Course for Advent and Christmas are booked, but there is a Scripture Course going on at English Martyrs. Any events going on in York will be put in the Bulletin. The Meeting were reminded that at the last Meeting they were interested in L10 – Children's Liturgy of the Word. L15 – What an Honour – Ministers of the Word. L16 – What a Privilege – On going formation for Ministers of Holy Communion. SP1 – Teach us to Pray. P4 – Home is Holy Place. S18 – Introducing St. Paul. and S9 – Scripture in Advent/Christmas. The Committee were also interested in the Course on St. Paul, S19. Fr. Farrar would be available for these sessions next year. Fr. Ross will get in touch with Fr. Farrow regarding Eastertide Courses. It was thought we should see what is available and book them as soon as possible. There is a web calendar on the Diocesan web site: www.middlesbrough-diocese.org.uk.

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Bishop's Parish Visitation The dates depend on whether or not Fr. Ross is in hospital for his hip replacement. The dates proposed were 15th/16th November, and 19th November when the Bishop would like to go round the Parish – the Residential & Nursing Homes, and Sheltered Housing. He would like to meet community people, perhaps the local policeman? Perhaps Arc Light could be included. He wants to meet parishioners and see what we are doing. He will want to know what we are doing for Catechisis for the Sacraments. If the November dates have to be delayed, then he will probably come early next year.

Regarding Infant Baptism, perhaps we could introduce more preparation for Baptism by getting the family introduced to the community into which they are going to be Baptised. Parents should be seen at Mass, and show that they are serious about the development of the child. We cannot Baptise on the faith of grandparents, but on the faith of the parents. Catechists can be included in this. We have got a number of young families in the Parish, and it would be good to have them involved. Perhaps one Sunday afternoon, the family of the child to be baptised could meet with those doing Children's Liturgy of the Word, so that they could get support. It would be Baptism into the Community of Faith. Someone who is having a child baptised could meet those who have been through the process. They would then have someone to call on to help them out. We have had about fifteen Baptisms this year. We have had no marriages in this Parish for two years now. We cannot blame children in the society we live in, if the parents are not married.

First Communion Those baptised should be a resource for future Holy Communion.

Reconciliation –this takes place just before their First Holy Communion, but we must follow this up.

Confirmation There was a big Confirmation Service in York this year. The Deanery is planning to have one Confirmation Service every other year. So the next will be in 2010 when the Bishop will Confirm all the candidates. Instruction would take place both in the Deanery and in the Parishes. The young people need to know that they are in a much larger group than the Parish. There should be joint social things. Sponsors could be more involved. We could ask All Saints for the names of those of Confirmation age. Unfortunately most of the children from round here who go to All Saints have no contact with the church. It was suggested that a letter be sent to the children inviting them to come forward for Confirmation, and that one should also be sent to the parents, informing them of this.

Initiation of Adults – we had only one enquiry this year, and individual instruction was given. It was thought that perhaps people who had a Christian background could be given a more fast track instruction than people who had not been baptised, or had no religious background. There is also the question of ongoing formation for the sacraments and reconciliation.

Anointing of the Sick. When we have an annual Mass of anointing of the sick, most people seem to get anointed, but who can say who is sick? It is a strengthening Sacrament. Most anointing is of individuals in their own homes or in hospital. We should have some catechesis, and try to explain what it is about. Peoples perspective often is that if you have the Sacrament of the Sick you are on the point of death, which is not the case. It is appropriate for family or someone close, to apply for the Sacrament on behalf of the sick person.

Ministers of the Word It was suggested that Ministers of the Word should be meeting a little more often, sharing scripture and readings. We have a resource which we are not using. There are work shops prior to Ministers being commissioned and there should be training in the parish.

Ministers of Holy Communion. Priest identifies the person and asks them. It was suggested that Ministers of Holy Communion should also be meeting more often. There are work shops in the

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Diocese prior to them being commissioned at parish level. There should be training – in the parish. We have a resource we are not using.

We have prayers for vocations at the Holy Hour on Saturdays. We have groups and societies which work with others socially. Liz works with the homeless at Arc Light. Members of the Ladies Group have contacts with other organisations in the Church and with other denominations. More houses will be built on the grain store site. It was suggested we could give letters out to see how many Catholics were living in that area.. The Asian community are a great contribution to the Parish. It would be nice if we could mix socially. There has been a start at the Vigil Mass and the Race Night. They now have a Mass and meeting on the last Sunday afternoon of the month which lasts until 7.30 pm.

Christmas Fair – 6th Dec. 2 pm. Raffle Tickets would be on sale from beginning of November. The same people volunteer for running the stalls and are getting older, unfortunately no one else seems to be coming forward. We would hopefully have Father Christmas, though we had very few children last year. The Fancy Dress competition should be advertised much earlier. Liz said they needed to get in to the hall two days before the Fayre to set up Father Christmas' grotto.

Children's Party – Sunday, 14th December.

Any Other Business - the Apple Pie Supper date would be decided at the Ladies Group next Meeting.

Parking - What has been done further up Burdyke Avenue has made a difference. It would be much better if we could have the same adjustment at this end near the church.

Date & Time of Next Meeting - to be arranged.