

# St Edward the Confessor Church, Golders Green

## Summary of the Parish Open and Council Meeting held on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> October in the Hall

**Present:** c. 30 attendees

**Apologies (from Council):** 2 - Niamh, Irene

### 7.0 Prayer and welcome

Fr Paul welcomed and led everyone in the opening prayer (*Come Holy Spirit*)

### 7.1 Opening remarks

Fr Paul shared the 3-fold purpose of the meeting as to: (i) catch up following the last meeting in June and give updates (ii) look at the challenges we face, and (iii) consider the structure of the Council. He invited everyone to share freely and do so in a spirit of charity

### 8.0 Developments

Fr Paul shared the following good news:

- 8.1. **Deacons**- we are fortunate enough to now have 2 deacons ,whom he thanked for their service
- 8.2. **Catechetics** -are up and running, we have 1 more course this year than last year, enough catechists and 53 children
- 8.3. **Ministry Training** - went ahead thanks to Dcn David. We now have a full complement of Eucharistic Ministers and readers, though we could do with more servers at the 9 am and 6 pm Mass times
- 8.4. **Socials and sales** – coffee mornings are back. We've had fundraising sales for various causes, with thanks to Joan for coordinating
- 8.5. **Young Adults** – have re-started their first Sunday of the month Mass and social. Happily, 15 more joined at the last session
- 8.6. **RCIA** – sessions have started. The 5 candidates include some from a neighbouring parish – a reminder that we need to consider ways in which we can work together with and support our neighbouring parishes

Overall, we are getting back to normal operations.

### 9.0 Challenges

The main challenges we face are:

- 9.1. **Smaller congregation**– The annual Mass count reveals that our congregation has gone down by a third - from 750 to 400 adults and 50 children across 3 Masses.
- 9.2. **Decreased income** - Fewer people means less money coming in. Our income is down by 6K per month so budgeting for next year is particularly important
- 9.3. **Cost of living crisis** – which is impacting everyone. For us, the biggest issue is energy
- 9.4. **Energy costs** – we are still working on the figures and how we can reduce gas and electricity
- 9.5. **Glentree developments** – given the Secretary of State has allowed the appeal for all development to go ahead, we need to monitor the works closely

### 10.0 Discussion about the Parish Council Structure

We spoke about what might be most helpful way to move forward with the Parish Council to get things done. The discussion confirmed that it is useful to have the working groups and we do need to revive and re-form them.

Suggestions included:

- Maintain various working groups limited to 4 re-branded and re-organised as:
  - Worship and liturgy
  - Faith Formation
  - Social and Outreach
  - Finance and Premises
- Describe what group each does and promote them so that people are clear
- To help re-energise the Council, there must be structure, regularity and routine. It might work better if the different groups met on different days
- Each group is autonomous with a chair who inspires and brings people together to focus on 2/3 action items
- On the basis that groups meet once a term, chairs report to Fr Paul four times a year
- Highlight the need for general help to the wider parish in pulpit and printed notices
- Have a revolving list of activities in the newsletter so parishioners can engage on an ad hoc basis, if need be

**11.0 Safeguarding Rep needed** We need somebody to help Alvaro, our Safeguarding Lead. It's mostly administrative and requires that the person attends the safeguarding training. If you are interested or know anyone who is, please speak to Alvaro

**12.0 Consultation on hall rental proposal** Fr Paul shared a proposal to increase income by renting the hall to a pack-away nursery. In principle, it means we hire out the entire space during the week and have it back at the weekend. The proposal was accepted and will be put to the parish

**13.0 Christmas Mass times** Fr Paul sought out opinion about proposed Mass times for Christmas Eve of 6 pm (family Mass) and 10.30 pm (night Mass). Fr Paul will ponder the varied feedback and decide. On Christmas Day, Mass will be at 9 am and 10.30 am, no Mass at 6 pm

**14.0 Feedback- open discussion highlights:**

- **Hospitality** – we all need to practice hospitality by being conscious of newcomers and people we don't know, introducing ourselves and being welcoming. We could have a parish welcome pack
- **Outreach** we ought to tap into parishioners who need help especially those with mobility issues and the elderly – perhaps we can have a regular tea party for older folk
- **Church helping children/families** - have an information session for parents so they can encourage their children to go to Sunday School instead of playing on their mobile
- **Liturgy-** a request for Mass books at 10:30 am Mass - not enough Mass sheets
- **Packaway nursery proposal** – Parish wide consultation to include proposal for us to subsidise 1 or 2 places for children that wouldn't be able to afford the fees
- **Parish Council** – next step to drive this forward is for Fr Paul and Kasonde to liaise so that he can ask the leads of the groups to start. Members are free and welcome to move to whichever group suits them best. Any ideas about the Parish Council should be emailed to the Parish Office.

**15.0 Close**

There was no further business to discuss. Fr Paul thanked everyone. The meeting closed with us praying the Glory Be