

**Parishes of St Aidan and St Teresa of the Infant Jesus,**  
**Newcastle upon Tyne**  
**Joint Pastoral Council Meeting.**  
**7.15 pm Tuesday 12 June 2018.**  
**St Aidan's Hall**

Present: Father Mariadass, Bernie Lamb (chair), Carole Lee, Julia Firbank, Tony Ingoe, Mike Potts, Kathleen Gregor, Mark Hayes, Janet Wallbank, Martha Kennedy, Anne Grant, Douglas Lamb, Alison Rebello, Frank Gilmour, Andrea Hayes, Kath Gray, Lucy Mendez, Kelechi Dibia

Apologies: Sister Dorothy, Stephen Fallon, David Baez and Vincent Turner

### **Introductions**

The meeting began with an introductory prayer and a blessing from Fr Mariadass. Bernie chaired the meeting as it was being held at St. Aidan's. Each member introduced themselves to the rest of the Council.

### **How Parishes will work together**

Fr. Mariadass advised the committee that there was a need to come together under Forward Together in Hope and that the two parishes can learn from and enrich each other.

It is also practical to share activities and to come together for key events such as Easter, which had proved to be a great initiative. More of these joint events and initiatives will help strengthen relations between the two parishes.

It was asked if the two parishes would still remain with their own separate identities. Fr Mariadass confirmed this would be the case.

It was asked how do we do this and how will it work? As parishes we want this to work, but the difficulty will be in achieving it and making it work. It was agreed that there were no quick solutions and that we will work towards making it happen.

Fr. Mariadass advised that in a year's time he would consider having a Joint Pastoral Council and a Joint Finance Committee, but it was right for each parish to remain different and that things would be left as they are for now.

Concerns were expressed that St Teresa's felt they they could have filled the agenda twice over with matters concerning St. Teresa's, such as First Holy Communion, Catechists etc.

Concerns were also raised about the demands on Fr Mariadass's time and that perhaps meetings should be held separately when discussing issues such as school events when separate liaising would be required either with St Teresa's School or St Stephen's. This was particularly relevant in relation to Holy Communion, as it has been established that activities are to be very much Parish focussed going forward. The Liverpool model which is being adopted moves the onus away from the school to the Parish. Fr Mariadass agreed to meet with St. Teresa's PPC before the end of July to discuss outstanding matters

It was also suggested a shared events calendar would be useful for planning purposes which could be circulated via email and used to capture key events. It was agreed that this would be a good start. It was acknowledged that St. Teresa's Summer Fair is planned for July 7<sup>th</sup>. It

was agreed to share information with St Aidan's to support the event via the Parish bulletin in the hope of encouraging attendance from St Aidan's.

Fr Mariadass advised that he had been looking to disband the current councils after he had been in the Parish for a year and was looking to form a new joint Council. He would consult on how best to progress this with new members. This was something that a new parish priest can do, although it hasn't previously happened in our two parishes.

Concerns were expressed in the hope that Fr Mariadass would work with the current Parish Councils, rather than telling the Councils what to do, and that the matter should be discussed with the current councils before final decisions were made.

It was acknowledged that Fr Mariadass had clear ideas about how to progress this matter and asked that people took time to think and pray about the process.

### **Joint Parish Activities**

**Sponsored Walk – June 30<sup>th</sup>.** It was agreed that for our first joint walk we should walk from St. Aidan's to St. Teresa' via Jesmond Dene, taking between 2-3 hours. Janet had a route in mind which she had already walked. The plan is to start with a Mass at St Aidan's followed by a group photograph and then the walk and ending with refreshments at St Teresa's. Health and Safety issued were considered. In future years we could look to go further afield.

**BBQ – August Bank Holiday Monday 27<sup>th</sup> August.** This is to be held at 2pm at St Aidan's with a proposed cost of £5/adult and free for children. Fr Mariadass to use his contacts to arrange the food. It was agreed to use St Teresa's BBQ equipment.

**Picnic – Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> September.** Consideration was given about where to go – Melrose was agreed as the location. Plans to be made to review coach costs before agreeing the price to attend. Bernie will get quotes from bus companies.

**Joint Retreat in October** – proposed for both Parish councils with a plan to review the availability of Minsteracres. The future of the current Parish Councils was discussed again in relation to Fr Mariadass's desire to re-convene with a new Council. Strong feelings were expressed about dissolving the existing Councils in December, as this conflicts with the constitution of St Teresa's Council which runs from October to October. It was agreed that, given the uncertainty of the future of the parish Councils, the retreat should be postponed until next year.

### **Jesmond St Mary's Partnership Updates**

**Future Events-** Julia provided information about the following events:

- Evening Meeting to discuss First Holy Communion Catechists at St Mary's High School on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> July.
- Come to the Well Course – St Lawrence/Our Lady and St Vincent's to begin on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> September for 5/6 weeks.
- Partnership Liturgy of Mercy to be held at St Teresa's on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent 2019 (17<sup>th</sup> March).
- PDG Meeting to be held on 4<sup>th</sup> July which will share information from Parishes about current position regarding Young People and Outreach to People in Need. Ideas for future development are welcome. Pat Henzell to be contacted about previous youth activities that have been held.

### **Ways Forward for Development Areas for Young People.**

Possible activities for young people were suggested including inter-parish football matches, supporting business interests which may help within the parish.

Fr Mariadass plans to set up a Parish Youth Group between the two parishes. Some parishioners have already been approached and they have agreed to support the initiative.

It was questioned if a Parish Youth Co-ordinator has been considered, as other Partnerships employ someone in this role. It was suggested to contact the Youth Village which should be encouraged to reach out to Parishes rather than remain focused on school activities. It was also suggested to ask the Young People what they would want as well as reviewing the questionnaire results from Forward Together in Hope for the Youth input.

**Alpha Course** – 2/3 parishioners from St Teresa's may be interested in leading. A couple of people have already attended an introduction to running the course and found it to be very positive. Fr Mariadass will assess interest and determine if there would be commitment to running a programme. It was thought it could be a useful outreach tool to parents of children within school. Janet and Julia agreed to be involved in future discussions about the course. Fr Mariadass to review a possible sub group.

**CW&C Teams** – St Teresa's – a possible shortage of ministers to run CW&C services. There are three lay leaders at St Teresa's. Attendance at CW&C services tends to be low and weekday masses are not well attended, so it was considered best to cancel in the Priest's absence.

St Aidan's have 5 lay leaders, but not all are able to attend regularly. Julia and Carole cover Wednesdays and Fridays. There are also low numbers, so there may be a need to review these services, especially on winter nights. Decisions will need to be made on viability going forward which may mean services being cancelled.

Fr Mariadass to promote the availability of masses within the week to encourage attendance between the two parishes.

The situation can be reviewed the next time a CW&C Leader's course is being run by the Diocese.

### **Christian Muslim Day of Prayer being planned for 30<sup>th</sup> June**

This was noted, but shouldn't impact on the sponsored walk.

### **Little Flower Concert**

Fr. Mariadass will discuss with the two Head Teachers of our parish schools. This is a service presented by the children. Fr Mariadass to co-ordinate activities.

### **AOB**

Fr. Mariadass informed the meeting that a second priest will be arriving in August.

Fr. Mariadass is planning an 'Away Day' for altar servers.