

**Sacred Heart and St Antony's Joint Parishes**  
**Annual General Meeting**  
**Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2013 at 3.30 pm**

**Present:** Bishop Declan Lang (Bishop of Clifton)  
Canon Bernard Massey (Priest of the Joint Parishes)

**PPC members**

**Sacred Heart:** Jane Dyer (Minutes), David Gabriel, Chris Menzies, Jacek Miotla, Gill Preisner, Jake Preisner, Frank Tothill (Chair).

**St Antony's:** Sue King, Bernard Thomas.

**Parishioners:** 71 as per lists.

**Apologies for Absence**

Stuart and Pat Craddy, Petronella Mason, Roger and Mary Mason.

**1 Opening Prayer**

Canon Bernard opened the meeting with prayers and the Lord's Prayer.

**2 Welcome to Bishop Declan**

Bishop Declan was welcomed to the first combined AGM of both parishes by Frank Tothill.

**3 Introduction of all PPC members**

Frank Tothill introduced all those PPC members present to the meeting.

**4 Minutes of last AGM**

The Minutes of the last AGM held on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2011 were signed by the Chair, Frank Tothill.

**5 Parish Priest's Report (Canon Bernard Massey)**

Canon Bernard distributed copies of his Report which is reproduced below:

2012 was an interesting year; it was a period of consolidation and planning. Consolidating on the numbers of people attending church and also those actively involved in different ministries. After the building work of 2011 it was a good opportunity to pause and draw breath. But it was certainly not a time to sit back and do nothing. You will discover in the Parish Pastoral Council review of the many initiatives and great work that happened in our parishes during 2012.

However, there are some areas I would like to highlight: firstly the parish website. This took almost 6 months of planning and preparation before we finally launched it in July. Since then over 5000 people have accessed it. I have received, and continue to receive, positive comments on people's experience of using this site.

Secondly, the Food Bank which we have supported since April 2012. Up to the end of the year we have contributed well in excess of 2000 kg. We are the largest supporting organisation of the Bristol North West Food Bank. Through your generosity we are helping to change the lives of significant numbers of people in our part of Bristol who daily live with food poverty.

Of course, the most significant event of the year was the twinning of the parishes of the Sacred Heart and St Antony's. The people of St Antony's have shown a great willingness to embrace the changes. The people of the Sacred Heart have shown a willingness to attend services at St Antony's and for the two parishes to work in partnership. However, between the two parishes we have lost around 50 people due to the changes. I hope and pray that they have gone to other parishes.

Looking forward to this year, we have 18 children on our First Holy Communion programme which is made up of children from both parishes.

The refurbishment of the presbytery at St Antony's is almost complete and I would hope that by the end of February we would be able to see tenants moving in. Not only will this add to the security of the site, but more importantly it will give a much-needed income boost to the parish, and so we should, over the next four or five years, pay off our parish debt.

Building works are planned at the Sacred Heart with modifications to the narthex to make the area a bit brighter and to give additional facilities of overflow for the church. Also the sanctuary area is to be remodelled, and the steps, which have proved a hazard to some people, will be replaced with something far more easily accessible.

Finally, with the new Parish Administrator, Jo Savery, having started work, this has already proved a benefit to me. It has enabled me to spend more time on pastoral work and less on paperwork. So as ever I look forward with great enthusiasm to the coming year.

## **6 Parish Pastoral Council Report (Frank Tothill)**

Frank Tothill distributed copies of his Parish Pastoral Council Report which is reproduced below:

The fourteen months since the last Sacred Heart AGM in November 2011 have been a busy and successful time for the PPC. We have met nine times, with representatives from St Antony's attending all meetings since the announcement in July that, from the beginning of October, Canon Bernard would be serving both Sacred Heart and St Antony's. Since that announcement, the main focus has been on bringing the two parishes together. This has been achieved with remarkable success, given the adjustment needed to the necessary changes. The resulting developments in the life of the joint parish are ongoing.

During November 2011 and January 2012, Sacred Heart hosted the "Diary of God" course led by John Huntriss, run as a Diocesan event. In Lent, the CaFE DVD course "Live Life to the Full" was held at Sacred Heart, with an open invitation to parishioners of St Antony's. Both these courses were well supported, so we intend to run the CaFE DVD course "Year of Faith" at both sites this coming Lent.

Support for the young people of the parish continues to develop: "Little Church" has grown in numbers, the post First Communion group has flourished, and an initial post Confirmation activity was held.

In May, over 40 of us enjoyed a one day pilgrimage to Buckfast Abbey, and then in June a Family Event was held at the Newman Hall, starting with an outdoor Mass, followed by a Barbecue, which was generously supported by City of Bristol Catenians. This was very successful, although rain curtailed activities in the afternoon.

The parish has again supported CAFOD very generously in 2012. During Lent, encouraged by Government "matching funding", we raised a record £4415 through the Fast Day, Pancake Supper, 3 Hunger Lunches and the "give it up" boxes. We raised £1916 for the Harvest Fast Day, including the proceeds from a well attended Fast Day supper, and £392 for the Connect 2 Cambodia scheme (including a hunger lunch and cake decorating lesson).

Parishioners supported the CAFOD campaigns, *Thirst for Change* and *Hunger for Change*, sending campaign cards urging the Government to take and influence action to reduce hunger and thirst in the world. Information has been given on CAFOD's worldwide activities both in the newsletters and at the suppers and lunches.

In addition, we started collecting food for the Bristol North West Food Bank. This has continued to be well supported at Sacred Heart, and more recently at St Antony's.

On behalf of the combined parishes, I would like to thank Canon Bernard for all his hard work on our behalf. I would also like to thank all the members of the PPC for all they have done, and all of you, the parishioners, for your support. Thank you.

## 7 St Antony's Report (Bernard Thomas)

Overall, the parish has gone through many changes this year. The financial position of the current account is still showing a loss. The account balance on the 14 month period is extended to take into account the additional money raised from fund raising and other additional incomes. We would all like to thank Finance Secretary, Yvonne Barbaszynska, who in very difficult circumstances has made some real progress in getting the parish finances in order.

- December 2011 -£22800
- July 2012 -£17243
- January 2013 -£25692 additional costs outside our control

Canon Bernard informed us the overall amount would increase to £50,000 to refurbish the presbytery at Henbury. However, this would be paid off in around 5 years once the house was rented out

During this period, the parish has raised money from the Christmas Fayre, the Summer Fete, and the One Day's Pay gift aid appeal – claiming tax on the individual who pays at least basic tax or above. During the year we have had normal celebrations of Masses during the week, confessions after Saturday Mass and Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. However, this was extended to two hours on the first Saturday of the month. For Sunday Mass, the younger children attended the catechist teaching for 20 minutes for the first part of Mass and returned to join in the offertory procession. During Lent, we raised money in the Lenten Alms box for CAFOD. We also had Stations of the Cross on Tuesday evenings, followed by Benediction and Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. A further Stations of the Cross was held at midday on Fridays to help the elderly who found it difficult to make the evening celebration.

Highlights of special significance included Mass for the Divine Mercy on the first Sunday after Easter. On the Sunday following the Feast Day of Corpus Christi, we held a procession around the streets in Henbury with parishioners attending from St Vincent's, Our Lady of the Rosary, and St Bonaventure's. Finally a Latin Mass was said every 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month at St Antony's with many parishioners attending from the wider surrounding area. This year our parish trip took us to Belmont Abbey: we started with a guided tour followed by Mass at midday, and in the afternoon visited the Mappa Mundi held within the confines of Hereford Cathedral.

Our biggest event was Father Michael departing to St Edmunds in Calne, Wiltshire. The parish organised a farewell party and presented a gift of money to Father as this was deemed to be most useful bearing in mind his move and would assist with any additional costs. Father has been with us for 12 years: Sunday, 16<sup>th</sup> September 2012, was the last Sunday Mass at St Antony's celebrated by Father Michael. We then had two weeks with stand-in priests. Canon Bernard arrived on 6<sup>th</sup> October with the first Saturday Mass for over 5 years. We all realise that these changes have caused pain and disappointment for some. But nevertheless we welcome Canon Bernard and all parishioners from Sacred Heart who hopefully will find a very warm welcome at St Antony's, Henbury. Finally, we all would wish to place on record all those who help keep the parish running, in particular all the ladies who do such sterling work behind the scenes.

## 8 Accounts

Gerry Calderbank distributed copies of Sacred Heart Balance Sheets as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011 and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012 together with Sacred Heart Income & Expenditure figures for year to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012. He reported that the finances were relatively healthy but advised that the income had been reduced as a result of having one less Sunday Mass. It was noted that Gerry Calderbank would be attending a future PPC meeting in order to present the accounts when finalised.

It was noted that £20,000 had been spent on the presbytery at St Antony's and that the anticipated monthly rental is £900 which will hopefully clear the debt.

Canon Bernard pointed out that Sacred Heart and St Antony's are two separate entities for financial purposes: Gerry Calderbank dealing with the Sacred Heart finances and Yvonne Barbaszynska with the St Antony's finances, and that the plan is to have a joint finance committee.

In answer to a question, Canon Bernard outlined the proposed alterations to the Sacred Heart sanctuary area, steps up to same, and the doors at the back of the church; he drew people's attention to the architect's drawings on display at the back of the church.

## **9 Bishop Declan**

Bishop Declan congratulated the joint parishes on the quality of the liturgy – vibrant liturgy leads to vibrant community. He spoke of the challenges to be faced when two parishes come together and also of the challenge of being a Catholic in today's secular society. He emphasised the importance of mutual support which is most visible when we come together as church on Sundays; we need to be especially aware of the need to support each other in faith during this 'Year of Faith'.

Bishop Declan spoke of the need to provide each other with occasions where we can share and deepen our faith to enable us to answer people when questioned. There is a need to instil a sense of confidence in ourselves, and his visitation is to help do that. God is calling us to be members of the church today and the Holy Spirit is at work in our lives. The message of the Gospel remains the same – only the method by which we communicate this message changes because the society in which we live changes. We need to be a people of hope – interested and listening to each other's story: and we need to be a church that looks out – the support we give to the Food Bank and to CAFOD denotes that this is indeed what we are: a church looking out.

## **10 Questions**

Bishop Declan was asked if he thought the church was being sufficiently strident in its opposition to same sex marriage: he advised that the church was in contact with Government Ministers and MPs and that people of different faiths were talking about this issue; but he warned of the danger of being seen as homophobic.

Bishop Declan was asked if the church should engage more assertively with the media: he replied that the church was actively engaged with the media both nationally and internationally; he also spoke of the work of the Department of Dialogue & Unity.

Canon Bernard was asked whether reports on other parish activities (such as St Wulstan's Club, UCM) could be included in the AGM reports; he replied that reports on all parish activities could be found on the parish website.

## **11 Any Other Business**

There was no other business.

## **12 Closing Prayer**

Canon Bernard closed the meeting with prayers.