

# Holy Trinity and Sacred Heart Parishes

Parish Annual Meeting – 9<sup>th</sup> May 2023

## Minutes

**Present:** 44 parishioners and clergy were present

### 1.0 Introduction

Fr Michael introduced the meeting with an opening prayer and welcome. Fr Michael, thanked everyone who had worked so tirelessly to keep the churches open, especially the stewards who ensured safe, hygienic access and cleaning at all the services.

### 2.0 Annual Report Review

Annual Report - Dcn Daniel presented the 2022 annual report and thanked everyone who had helped in its publication either through contributions from the various groups along with photographs or in proof reading. It was good to get back on track with the annual report record format.

The parish statics illustrated the extent of the work undertaken with many baptisms, funerals and weddings. Fr Michael said his work in the hospital meant that many people wished to be buried from Holy Trinity.

Parish Directory – Included in this year report was also a Parish Directory – a moving target in terms of names and contact details, but issued to provide a readily accessible document that would hopefully encourage parishioners to link up with the groups and bolster participation.

The report brings together a reflection on the last three years of the pandemic, which prevented many of the Church's activities and those of the groups from being able to meet and function fully. Nevertheless, amidst all these difficulties many good works were still undertaken. Jo Clements spoke about the SVP with the merger of the two parish groups, which was a very positive development and had led to new recruits. Jo thanked everyone for their generosity and the group were keen to look for new ways to help the community and needs both locally and to inner city areas. Similarly, the Ladies Guild spoke positively about an increase in numbers and the support that is given by the group.

Covid – On-line streaming has proved to be a tremendous success and was reaching out to an international audience as well as from around the UK. For these reasons and despite the weekly costs involved with maintain the service, Fr Michael wished to maintain the on-line streaming as many letters and emails are received expressing many thanks for the service, especially from the house bound or those who are unable to attend mass in person.

Mass times - There are no current plans to change Church Mass times, however, this is dependent upon the continuing help given by Fr David Lacy and Mgn Cousins.

### 3.0 Finances Report

Finance Supplement - Les Sheldon handed out a finance report supplement with the accounts for 2020, 2021 and 2022 included together with a summary of the Safeguarding works carried out during the pandemic. Having provide a brief overview, Les confirmed that

the two parishes were financially very health – Holy Trinity had savings of circa £334,000.00 and Sacred Heart circa £343,000.00.

Church Maintenance – Jim Phillips summarised the many works carried out over the last 3 years and confirmed that the next major project was to rebuild the Holy Trinity car park boundary wall. Sutton Charities were supporting circa 50% of the cost these works.

The new Sacred Heart Hall entrance semi-circular ramp was felt to be too steep. It was agreed that these works would be looked at again and the ramp gradient changed to make it easier to use.

Accessibility to the small Holy Trinity Hall was also raised as well at the Church choir loft – It was agreed that disabled access/toilet provision to the hall and a lift to the choir loft would be investigated.

The lightning strike had caused many of the church's electrical systems to be damaged, hence the additional costs for maintenance. Most of these costs have been covered by insurance.

Finance query - A query regarding the presbytery rental income at Sacred Heart Church was raised – currently, the monies (£500.00 per month) is paid into the Holy Trinity account. The Treasurers letter said it would be paid to the parish. Although the letter did not identify which parish, the Diocesan payment, set up by the Diocese, establishes this as due to Holy Trinity. Les pointed out that the Fotherley Hall stipend (circa £14,000) was still being paid into Sacred Heart account whereas this service is being looked after by Holy Trinity. It was felt, given that both church accounts are not in debt, that these matters are all best left with Fr Michael as Parish Priest to decide.

Collections – It was mentioned that most people rarely carry cash anymore and would the option to have available a card machine (as many churches are now doing this) be an option. Fr Michael expressed his thanks for the generosity of the people in Sutton Coldfield and did not wish to over emphasis the need for money, and most people understood that costs were rising and would respond accordingly. Gift aid was always important and should be encouraged as the parishes gain some tax benefits.

#### **4.0 Youth Worker up-date**

Dcn Daniel apologised for not including reference to our youth work – the appointment of Dom Cotter as the parish youth worker had unfortunately coincided with the pandemic, which had a very negative impact on what works could be achieved. Dom was limited primarily to working in Bishop Walsh and with all of the restrictions was unable to attract young people back to regular mass attendance. During the time that Dom was with us a significant grant from Sutton Town Council helped to support his salary costs. Daniel wished to thank the Youth Worker Coordination committee and all those who had helped support this venture. It was mentioned of the Youth Venture groups that use the parish halls on a Friday night was raised, Dcn Daniel said that he had been in touch with the group to see if they would like to participate in any times of prayer/adoration or masses, but was told that they were non-denominational group.

Future - Further thought would be given to how best support the youth in the parish – though we should not forget that we have a very good children's liturgy group, and a

monthly family mass as well as school class attendance at the Friday weekly mass. It was noted that youth and young family involvement at Sacred Heart Church was very rare – Fr Michael said that these factors will bear on the longer term question of the future of our parishes.

Jo Boyce spoke about the encouragement given to recruit youth readers at the 6.00pm Sunday evening mass, which is proving to be very good.

Michael Gaffney spoke positively about the Altar servers, who are in good number, but always in need of new members coming from the Y3 Holy Communion year.

## **5.0 Archbishop's Diocesan Vision (Synodality)**

Dcn Daniel confirmed that the parish synodality discussions/meetings had been fed into the Diocesan Report and this in turn fed into the nations (England and Wales) report – see link: <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2022/06/synod-national-synthesis-england-wales.pdf>, which was a very good report summary. The main purpose of synodality was to enculturates a new emphasis on 'listening' at every level of parish life in such a way that the gospel speaks more directly to us, thus opening us up to the movement of the Holy Spirit.

Diocesan Pascal Plan – The Archbishop, in response to the synodality process, has set out a vision for promoting greater participation and co-responsibility in the key areas of evangelisation, liturgy / formation and social outreach. Currently, at Deanery level, the clergy are exploring the idea of clustering parishes so that we can look at how best our resources can be shared to achieve these goals..... more to follow on this.

Hospital / sick visitation – Eucharistic ministers – Whilst during the pandemic all volunteering had been stopped, resumption is now once more encourage. There is a need to re-apply and Fr Michael has volunteer forms. This is a very important work and a blessing for those who can give the time to be involved.

## **6.0 Parish Annual Lunch**

Dcn Daniel spoke about the last attempt to gather as a parish for a lunch which was also combining Fr David Ordination anniversary in January 2022 – you will all remember the failed gas delivery at Weeford! Notwithstanding, it was agreed that this event was very worthwhile, particularly as it sought to bring the two parishes together. Perhaps this time the tables could be arranged so that they were representative of both parishes – organising volunteers requested.

## **7.0 A.O.B**

Fr David wished to thank everyone for the support he had received over the years and wished to commend to us the work of Fotherley Hall and the Sisters kindness to the elderly.

Fr Michael thanked the Ladies Guild for preparing lunch today for the deanery meeting and for providing the cheese and wine available after the meeting.

Appreciation for the help that Mgn Cousins gives to maintain the daily mass at Sacred Heart was acknowledged.

## **8.0 Closing Prayer**

The meeting closed with prayer at 8.50pm.