

Minutes for Extraordinary Meeting of St Michael's Parish Pastoral Council, Sonning
Common
held on Wednesday 29th April, 2020

Present: Fr M, DB, KS, ML, BW, MOD, TM Apologies: SB,
Opening prayer – Fr Michael

With the Lockdown enforced by the British Government it was agreed to hold a PPC meeting via zoom, with a view to discussing how Parish Life is being managed and how when the Lockdown is lifted Parish Life might resume.

FrM started the meeting with a brief overview of what he is doing with regards to Masses in these extraordinary times.

He remarked that he thought the Confirmation and First Holy Communion Services for the Parish would be postponed – although there had been no confirmation as yet from the Bishops

Going forward Father Michael would like to try to stream Masses from St Michael's Church. – there are several possibilities.

The first is that we use a company such as MCN which is the company used by The Sacred Heart in Henley. However, this is an expensive option and there appears to be a waiting list.

The second option is to stream via You Tube - Father Michael has looked at certain broadcasts from Tamworth and some other parishes and had a phone call with one of the Parish priests to ask how they set up their system. He will follow this up to find out what camera they used.

KS is also waiting to hear back from her contact at St Anselm's parish in London as they live stream via You Tube and KS contacted them to get some advice on how to set up a system.

FrM had also put a call in to a local company Caversham Aerials to ask if they could set up a system – however they rang back to say they were unable to help.

It was suggested that KS contact Milo technical support in Sedgewell Road to see if they can help.

ML mentioned that she and her husband had been able to extend internet capacity to their annexe by using a patch lead cable and BTdisc which allowed them to connect their BT broadband router to one in their annexe. KS will discuss with PL to get more details.

Fr M asked what time the committee thought would be a good time to stream Masses once we have the capability. He had noted that a lot of Churches were streaming Masses at 9.00 am or 9.30am – so he proposed that Mass could be streamed from St Michael's at 11am: this would also mean that those in care homes would be up and dressed and free to watch the service before their lunch times.

MOD asked if once the streaming is in place that perhaps we can continue the broadcasting even after lockdown conditions are lifted, especially for those who are unable to get to St Michael's Church in person.

KS asked if there is anything we can do for people who do not have internet access or who are not confident using the current streaming services.

Several proposals were put forward including the donation and use of old phones or tablets and the donation of a mobile contract to give a parishioner the data they require to stream a service.

It was also suggested that perhaps someone could phone someone without internet access and use the phone microphone to the screen streaming the service so that the person at the other end could hear the service.

DB said he is calling some parishioners who do not have internet access and is reading the Gospel and trying to do a simple service with them on a one to one basis.

MOD asked about the availability of the sacrament of confession and whether it is possible to do this via zoom or over the phone. Unfortunately, it is not.

A discussion was also had about other initiatives that are happening, such as the call by Pope Francis to pray the Rosary in May.

Currently the parish broadcasts a session on the Acts of the Apostles via zoom every weekday at 12pm. It was suggested that at the end of each daily session during the month of May, we could finish the session by saying a decade of the Rosary.

A discussion was then had as to what will happen when the lockdown ends.

Father Michael suggested that this could take two forms with a larger celebration and thanksgiving happening once there is a complete end to all social distancing and lockdown measures - although it was acknowledged that this may be not be for some time yet.

Suggestions when then given by PPC members for measures that could be taken once Masses are allowed to resume. These included:

Social distancing - including only using alternative benches and only allowing people to sit at either end of the bench.

Using 2m distance indicator markers on the floor in church.

Limiting the number of people at a Mass to a maximum 30

The use of paper cupcake cases to put the altar breads into – these would be placed on a table in front of the altar so that people would take a single piece without touching anything else.

KS asked that members of the PPC might email their thoughts and ideas to the parish office so that they may be kept in a file for future reference.

It was suggested that we need to be proactive in thinking of ideas of how best to serve the people of the parish and not solely wait to react to the situations that will arise.

A discussion was had as to how to link with the staff and pupils at St Martin's school during this time.

Several suggestions were made such as videoing FrM and sending his recorded message to the children and their families via the school website.

KS asked if those praying for the children who were due to take their First Holy Communion could send letters via the school to the children and DB said he would confirm this.

It was suggested that if we are able to get the You Tube Broadcast up and running that perhaps FrM could do Class Masses for the children which they could watch live.

Finally, KS asked if there was a possibility of a doing a virtual Parish Quiz via zoom as the parish was supposed to have held a quiz night at the end of April. It was agreed that a note would be sent out in the newsletter to see if there was any appetite for this at this time.

The PPC look forward to receiving ideas from parishioners on how we can develop the parish community under the current and future conditions.

The meeting was closed with a prayer

Next meeting to be confirmed.