

St Martin de Porres

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Minutes of meeting held of 17 January 2012 at 7.00pm

Present: Helen Bailey (LPA Rep and Chair), Phil Hallman (Head, St Martin's School), Fr George Malecki sds, members of the Parish

1	Welcome and Opening prayer
	The meeting opened with a word of welcome and an opening prayer composed specially for this series of parish meetings.
2	Implications for the parish
	<p>Helen Bailey made reference to the previous LPA meeting and the priorities raised and highlighted in the Rep Statement of 10/11th December 2011.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Valuing and supporting each church community.2. Concern for the Priest's increased workload3. Working closer together with our neighbouring church communities <p>Fr George commenced with a short background and how he envisaged the future of the three parishes might work.</p> <p>A question was asked to clarify if St Martin's was going to lose the Sunday Mass. Fr George said that he felt that he needed time between masses to spend time with the parishioners of each of the churches ie. St Augustine's, Our Lady's and St Martin's. He suggested a timetable of Sunday Masses that he felt comfortable working with.</p>
3	Proposals to ensure the priest can cope with demands of each community.
	<p>Sunday Mass</p> <p>The following timetable was proposed.</p> <p>5.00 pm on the Saturday at St Augustine's, 9.00 am at St Martin's on Sunday 11.00 am at Our Lady's on Sunday.</p> <p>Our Lady's would lose its Saturday evening Mass and Saint Augustine's its Sunday morning.</p> <p>This was accepted by those present who said that they wished to look after their priest. Fr George said that he could cope with these mass times and would find them sustainable in the long term.</p>

	<p>A question was asked if anything else the parishioners could do to help? Fr George said that the main masses at each church could be supported by the other church communities. He explained that the celebration of the Eucharist (the Mass) is more important than the convenience of a weekday service of Word with distribution of Holy Communion or other devotions. The Mass is central to our faith and is the means Our Lord gave us to bring us together and unite us as his family in a visible witness to him. School masses and special feast days will be flexible with exceptions according to the particular feast day and celebrated as close to the day as possible.</p> <p>The Lenten journey of Station Masses will continue and as before on the days of the Station Masses, there would be no mass in the morning.</p> <p>Ash Wednesday will most likely be celebrated with one mass at each of the three schools.</p> <p>Holy Week Triduum – suggested format.</p> <p>Maundy Thursday – St Martin’s at 7 or 7.30pm Good Friday – Our Lady’s at 3.00pm Easter Vigil – St Augustine’s at 7 or 7:30pm. Easter Sunday – The idea of a single Easter Sunday morning Mass where all three church communities would come together was floated. The decision as to whether this would go ahead or not will be made in due course.</p> <p>Daily Masses :</p> <p>Fr George said that there would not normally be a Mass on a Monday, but will continue to keep this arrangement flexible.</p> <p>It was proposed that each church celebrate a weekday Mass in turn on a Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday and that Friday could see each church take a turn celebrating an additional one. If, for any reason, one church missed its weekly slot, where possible Friday (and even a Monday) could be used to redress the balance.</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>How do we see ourselves as part of the wider community across the three parishes?</p>
	<p>Fr George said that we are working towards the day that all three church communities will become a single parish and that right from day one, we should be working towards that end. To do this, we were encouraged to support one another’s Masses and social events. He reminded everyone that ‘<i>A welcoming community is a strong community</i>’.</p>

	<p>He continued to say that what we have now is the foundation for the future and that despite the additional workload, baptisms, funerals and other services will continue as normal. All being well, we may have the services of a deacon in the near future and this would help ease the burden considerably.</p> <p>Phi Hallman said that during our devotions we should pray for schools, children and the community.</p> <p>A discussion of basic catechesis and commitment of parents took place. It was said that mass times and venues might be an inconvenience for some. Fr George spoke about the need for support in this area and for volunteers to help with transport to enable more people to get to Mass.</p> <p>Fr George asked if a parish forum would be helpful, to voice concerns and help build co-operation between our three communities. As a starting point, these meetings could be held on a monthly basis and then adapted as things progressed. There was general agreement that this would be a good idea.</p> <p>There will be one regular newsletter to cover all three churches</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Additional items of interest</p>
	<p>Following a question, Fr. George said that the church does encourage other forms of devotion but asked that they not take place at the same time a mass is being held at another of our churches – the celebration of the Mass must take priority and he felt it was not right that obstacles should be put in the way.</p> <p>Fr Colin and Fr. Peter (Robbo) will be contacted for assistance when necessary.</p> <p>Fr George assured everyone that despite everything, Runcorn is well catered for. Within the LPA there are six churches all within minutes of each other and all six are provided with Mass every weekend. Such generous cover is not available in some parts of the diocese. For this reason, and in answer to the question as to why Father Lucas was not being allowed to remain until the end of the year, the need in these parts is greater than here and his continuing presence in Runcorn, welcome though it is, just delays the inevitable.</p> <p>Question posed: Why does the Bishop Mark not approach Rome for more priests? A. If every bishop did this, how many priests would Rome be looking for worldwide? Two million? Three million? More? Where do priests</p>

	<p>come from, it was asked? The families that make up our parishes. The Church urges all Catholics in the light of fewer clergy to pray all the more earnestly for vocations.</p> <p>As for priests from abroad, the solution is not as straightforward as would at first seem. Among the major issues and obstacles encountered are tough immigration requirements, clashes of culture and training requisites. Also these priests are probably needed just as much, if not more so, at home and elsewhere in the world because despite our current level of clergy, we are still far better off than most of the world for most of the time down through the centuries.</p>
6	Date of next meeting
	<p>Everyone was thanked for attending and the meeting closed with a prayer.</p> <p>Wednesday 1 February 2012 at St Chad's starting at 7.00pm</p>