**THE MAIDSTONE DEANERY**

**PASTORAL COUNCIL**

**Minutes of a meeting held at St Thomas More, West Malling,**

**on Monday 20th February 2017**

**Present:** Peggy Arnold (Chair) (Maidstone South), Geraldine Sowerby (Secretary) (Maidstone), Dave Arnold (Maidstone South), Jean Shill (Goudhurst), Betty Curtin (Goudhurst), Ian Bruce-Russell (Bearsted), Anne Hayden (Bearsted), and Fr Peter Soper (West Malling).

1. **Apologies:** Fr Vic McLean (Goudhurst), Canon Luke Smith (Maidstone), Fr Roy Tablizo (Maidstone South), Deacon Tom Coyle (Maidstone), Fr Geoffrey Pointer (Bearsted), and Deacon Cyril Durbin (Bearsted).

2. **Minutes of the previous meeting:** The minutes of the meeting were agreed as a true record, and signed by the Chair.

3.  **Matters arising:** A Mass for the Sick to include the southern parishes of the deanery is being organised by Deacon Jolyon at Tenterden on 20th May at 3pm. Bishop John will preside. Bearsted, West Malling and St Francis held a successful Mass at St Francis on 11th February and Aylesford had already held one. Holy Family had a Mass on 11th February and about two dozen attended.

Clergy Support Fund had a letter of thanks sent to the team. Cranbrook and Tenterden have this in motion now.

It was agreed that the Spirituality Day in October was probably poorly attended as it was a ‘meeting too much’.

4. **Dean’s Report:** The deanery meeting was last Tuesday and attendees looked at the revamping of the diocesan finance office and the possible appointment of a maintenance man to oversee the maintenance of all parishes.

The diocese has a board of trustees and it was agreed that more lay trustees needed to be appointed.

The diocesan clergy are meeting at Merville in France and they are going to be looking at *Amoris Laetitia* (On Love in the Family) which is the Pope’s letter. It has been suggested that parishes look at this beforehand, as there are pastoral implications to this letter. West Malling parish have already done this and can provide a template of questions if required.

The University Chaplaincy at Canterbury is being rebuilt.

Aylesford Priory has many plans for the future including moving diocesan youth services from its current site at Whitstable to Aylesford. Other plans for housing are still ongoing.

At the deanery clergy meeting it was agreed that there would be another readers/ministers day at Tenterden on 6th May from 2-5pm which Canon Luke will lead and which is open to everyone.

There will be a synod on youth in October/November 2018.

There is some uncertainty over the date of the confirmations for the parishes in the north of the deanery – this will be advised when finalised.

At the Council of Priest’s meeting on 22nd February, Canon Luke and Fr Peter Soper will be asking if the annual Mass counts could be done in November or March rather than October, as this includes half term and doesn’t give a true reflection.

Merton deanery discussed the likely retirement of Archbishop Peter. This deanery would support a consultation as agreed at this meeting.

The possibility of new dalmatics to match the Diocesan vestments was discussed.

5. **Review of last year:**  It was agreed that the confirmations at Holy Family and the preparation day at West Malling last October went very well and thanks were offered to all those involved.

The next readers/ministers day at Bearsted is to be arranged by Deacon Tom following the success of the last one.

The Year of Mercy fell a bit flat towards the end.

Fatima 100 years anniversary – it was suggested that the Five Saturdays devotion could be followed. Bearsted are running a pilgrimage next year to Fatima/Lisbon and Santiago de Compostela. Holy Family parish are organising a trip to Medjugorje from the 4th October 2017 if anyone would like to attend.

Goudhurst Churches Together had a good talk on ecumenism with a good number of both Catholics and Anglicans.

6. **24 Hours for the Lord:** This annual event will take place at St Francis from 24th to 25th March and West Malling parish and Bearsted parish have already pledged support for this. Holy Family will possibly be doing something themselves or will support the St Francis one.

7. **Any Other Business:** It was noted that Bearsted Churches Together and Bearsted Justice and Peace groups were both chaired by St Peter’s parishioners.

St Simon Stock School is one of the top schools in the country for non-selective schools as quoted in media recently.

Fr Peter Growney who was at Holy Family for a short time has passed away – please remember him in your prayers.

The Terms of Reference for the DPC were presented and are included with these minutes. New members are required and this should be stated in parish newsletters.

7. **Date of next meeting: Tuesday 2nd May 2017 at 7:30pm at Sacred Heart, Goudhurst.**