

Parish AGM 2017

Fr. Raglan opened the meeting and gave thanks for all that Kevan Regan did in our parish as Chair of Finance and the AGM until his sad death last year. We remember him and his family in our prayers.

Accounts Douglas Ramsay and Jenny Swift presented the accounts for 2016. The comprehensive figures seemed to be the cause that there were no questions (copy available at the back of church). Whilst our overall funds are healthy, we were reminded that a proportion are 'restricted', already set aside in our budget for particular projects such as known building repairs.

Gift Aid Jennifer Brazier spoke of the challenge of following on from Kevan Regan. She has caught up with processing our claims and translated them to online form. She has produced a guide for parishioners on gift-aiding. Nationally, the Catholic Church gains an extra £1.4 million from its gift aid donors.

OLR Pastoral Committee As Chair Nick Woodall explained that this revived group have met for just 9 months and represent the rich variety of cultures in our 'Catholic' community. They have concentrated on 'inclusivity' events such as the Pentecost celebration in 9 languages. A Youth noticeboard has also been created. Our Polish representative (our thanks to Iza Wator) now has to stand down so we are seeking a replacement. We will shortly have names and photographs of the committee on the noticeboard, and want to invite suggestions as how we can build our community.

The Ordinariate As well as the Sunday 4pm at St. Agnes, they have been celebrating the beauty of the liturgy in the Divine Worship form at Our Lady of Ransom on Mondays (7.30pm). On special Feast days they contribute musically and chorally to joint celebrations in the evening. Pilgrimages to Walsingham and Bournemouth continue to be fully supported. Four members received Confirmation this year.

St. Gregory's A young congregation continues to be attracted on Sundays, and this was reflected in the high numbers for First Communion. Unfortunately the building has also attracted unwelcome break-ins (9 over the year) so that surveillance and security equipment has had to be fitted. The roof appeal reached £95,000, but currently there is discussion as to whether a full replacement, or just renewal in two specific areas, is needed. A professional report carried out in June has just been received and will be considered by the new Property Committee on August 9th (below).

St. Agnes After damage by a car last year, the Committee are working on a proposal to incorporate improved facilities (storage, kitchen, a Confessional) when the repair is done. The floor and walls of the Church have been refurbished, and covers put on radiators to prevent heating stains. Children's Liturgy has been re-launched on Sundays. The monthly lunches and weekly Lenten meals continue to attract large numbers of both parishioners and guest-friends from the area.

Fr. Raglan gave thanks for all the many people who offer invaluable service to the parish largely without special mention. We now have a Property Committee chaired by Clive Featherstone, and sub-group for Health and Safety (Pat James and Brian O'Neill). However, now that we have the resources to meet the practical issues of our buildings, this gives us a challenge we may be less aware of: our mission as Catholics to invite other people into our Church. They are its 'living stones' (1 Peter 2:5) without which the buildings would be empty. We received a legacy from our past Chair of Property, Patrick O'Donovan (RIP), and our Finance Committee recommended that half of that should go to support our mission as a community of faith. All parishioners are invited to suggest how a fund might be spent on a project connected with building up 'people', rather than physical structures.

Fr. Gerard outlined the 'Relit' programme that aims to revitalise the core of a parish, and then that way to evangelize the people around them. These are opportunities we need to pray over and discuss in the coming months.

A written question asked why we now have white rather than red wine at Mass. The new brand was chosen as it has a small amount of sugar which prevents it going 'off', especially in summer.

Fr. Raglan expressed thanks to the Social Committee for their welcome and refreshments.