

PARISH OF ST MARY, BRADFORD

Minutes of PPC Meeting Thursday Feb 12th 2026, at St Columba's

Present: Alan Duerden; Fr Festus; John Joyce; Kath Devlin ; Katarina Nzeribe; Mike Waite.

Apologies: Ann Marie Coubrough; Peter Maloney

1) **Opening Prayer & Reading**

John led with prayer, including the Synod Prayer to the Holy Spirit, and a reading from Pope Leo's Apostolic Exhortation '*Dilexi Te*'.

2) **Conversation in the Spirit:** – '*Review/ reflections on the 2025 Jubilee Year of Hope and the last few months in-parish*'.

Here are some of the comments:

- The Jubilee Year was very successful in Rome – millions of pilgrims – but had little impact on/ seemed not to be on the agenda of the local church in UK and the diocese. However the parish mini pilgrimage to the cathedral was very worthwhile.
- We are blessed this year with 3 candidates for reception into the church at Easter, maintaining the trend of recent years in this parish evangelisation/ growth. (There is more joy in heaven over)
- We continue to have new people coming to both churches. It would be good to know more about where they are coming from. (We have both families local to BD3-4 and from further afield).
- We should be grateful for the numbers regularly attending mass, including our weekday masses; and for those who attended the devotions in church – some coming to everyone.
- Another of our local churches – St Margaret's – has ceased holding services on a Sunday. It is important that we continue to shine a light in this place. Some churches are very active in social action, which is to be admired; but attendance for spiritual activities is also vital.

3) **Lent 2026**

a) Proposed program in church:

- Fr Festus is initiating a monthly Spiritual Revival program (see 4. below)
- Stations of the cross will be recommencing on Friday evenings
- Maundy Thursday and Good Friday celebrations this year will be at St Peter's; the Easter Vigil at St Columba's

b) Lenten prayers at home

- Fr Festus circulated a list of scriptural readings – based on the Psalms, and the sayings of Jesus in Mark's Gospel - and prayer intentions, for daily personal/ family use at home. He will be distributing copies of his publication on Jesus' sayings, for which a voluntary financial

contribution of £2.50 will be invited when this is announced at each church.

c) House Groups

- Sign-up forms are available at each church for the proposed Lenten House-group course 'Acts of Hope' based on the Acts of the Apostles. Two venues have already been offered – the presbytery and Tyersal – more would be welcomed. Published materials cover the discussion topics. House groups would be a good way of getting to know each other locally around the parish.

4) Monthly spiritual revival

Fr Festus is initiating on the 1st Wednesday in March a once-monthly program consisting of: mass, with singing, exposition, rosary, quiet time, and bidding prayers. It would be good if parishioners who play musical instruments could contribute. Early afternoon timing proposed, at St Columba's, with invitation to parents picking up their children from school to call in. More details to follow.

5) Parish pilgrimage; and parish excursion or picnic

- Pilgrimage has been discussed at previous meetings of this PPC.
- Hiring a coach – if numbers permit – and/ or public transport for nearer venues discussed.
- The stations of the cross at Myddleton Lodge outside Ilkley were very fruitful for those who attended last year.
- One of our parishioners has also proposed a pilgrimage to the Ladyewell shrine in Lancashire.
- It was agreed that a second collection be held to assist those for whom the cost of joining a pilgrimage would be inhibitive.
- When the weather improves (!) it would also be good to arrange a parish picnic.

More planning needed on each of these proposals.

6) Finances, running costs, building work and maintenance

a) Income, expenditure and growing parish debt

Alan circulated a very sobering brief summary of our current finances. Members of the PPC were shocked to hear that our parish debt is now over £100,000 and growing monthly. Our weekly collection at church is falling far short of what is required for us to become solvent. It was agreed that when the end-of year financial statement is completed after the end of March a full statement be made at each church of the significant imbalance of our income and expenditure, and its implication for parish-giving.

It was also agreed that none but essential maintenance/ repairs be undertaken at either church until our finances can be put on a firmer footing, and that all proposed expenditure be closely scrutinised.

b) Heating costs

The current gas bills for each church and the presbytery were shared, and comparison made with the rising cost of heating our homes.

c) Pending works

The leaking flat roof and internal ceiling damage above the Sacred Heart altar at St Peter's remains a pressing work to be tackled. Damp within the confessionals area has however been

successfully treated with bleach.

The suspected roof leak at the back of St Columba's is a historical carpet stain and not an indication of repair needed. A builder is however due at St Columba's church to investigate toilet outlet blockage/damage.

7) Any Other Business

a) Music before and during mass at St Peter's

A parishioner's son at St Peter's has offered to play through less well known hymns to familiarise the parishioners with the tune before mass; also to provide 'live' organ music at selected hymns during mass, and/ or for quiet background playing during communion. This offer was warmly welcomed.

b) Pending parish visitation by bishop Marcus.

Fr Festus has received notification of a proposed parish visitation from bishop Marcus, although the timescale has been affected by his taking over the running of the Middlesbrough diocese. Members of the PPC welcomed the opportunity to dialogue with him.

8) Proposed Next Meeting 11th June 2026, 7.00pm, at St Peter's.

PPC members were reminded of the encouragement given previously to invite a.n.other to join our PPC. At the same time Fr Festus expressed his appreciation of the current quality of contribution to the existing PPC.

9) Closing blessing and Prayer was led by Fr Festus.