

**Minutes of Parish Advisory Committee Meeting**  
**Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2025 at 11.45am at St Michael's Centre**

**Attendees:** Fr Matthew (FM), James Mulcahy (JM), Elaine Bright (EB), Jesumary Vijayashankar (JV), Stephanie Elias (SE), Lolita Parmesa (LP), Joe Disson (JD)

**Apologies:** Andreas Erhardt (AE), Monica Chidgey (MC), Margaret Evans (ME)

**1. Opening Prayer**

The meeting commenced with an opening prayer led by FM.

**2. Apologies**

Apologies were received and accepted from AE, MC and ME.

**3. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved. JM suggested we put them up within 14 days of submission to the PAC post-meeting. This was agreed.

**4. Matters Arising and Chair's Points**

No additional matters raised.

**5. Parish Priest's Report, including Evangelisation Report**

- **Annual Mass Count:** in progress
- **Evangelisation:** focus on welcoming, missionary, outward looking parish. Will be renamed to Parish Leadership course
- **Large Television:** going well, with view to purchase a second one in the New Year
- **Open Church:** the church building is left open most of the time during the day
- **Lunch Club:** to be readvertised to encourage increased numbers
- **Confirmation course:** open to Year 8 and above. 8 attended an informal get together this month, with future events to take place. Confirmation Mass scheduled for Sunday June 21<sup>st</sup>.
- **RCIA:** three adults are at various stages of converting.
- **Christmas events:** coming up, including school/parish Advent service
- **Churches Together:** FM is chair of Churches Together in Abergavenny. He has offered personal support to the Muslim Community who meet in the St Michael's Centre Fridays, and shown support to Monmouthshire County Council regarding the proposed Mosque at the old Library. Father is attending an Interfaith Event on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> November in Usk.
- **Absence:** FM away 16-24<sup>th</sup> October to attend niece's wedding.

**6. Reports from PAC Members**

#### **a. Catechesis & Children's Liturgy**

- **Holy Communion:** Children to undertake 10 sessions. Prospective date of 7<sup>th</sup> June (Corpus Christi) and Sacrament of Reconciliation during Lent.
- **Children's Liturgy:** There have been plans to create a working board that will have a monthly focus (e.g. October and the rosary, November and remembrance, December and Advent)
- **Rosary making:** Next Sunday, the session will be extended to include the Gospel and a discussion along with a rosary-making session.
- **Godly Play:** Discussions have begun to look into 'Godly Play' in a similar style to the school, to take place once a term. This is a carousel of activities (drawing, colouring, acting) to reflect on the Gospel and what they can take away.

#### **b. Filipino Community / Parish Connections:**

- No additional matters to report, however ideas are being collected for Advent/Christmas.

#### **c. Pro-Life / SPUC Group**

- **Leadbeater Bill:** There has been a lot of activity in the parish, and outside, organising letters to the House of Lords in opposition.
- **Communication with GPs:** Parishioners have written to their GPs to ask for guarantees that assisted dying will not be proposed by a doctor should the Assisted Dying Bill pass into Law. No replies received.
- **Crime and Policing Bill (Clause 191):** Parishioners are asked to continue writing to the Lords in opposition to the Antoniazzi on decriminalising self-induced abortion up to and during birth. There appears to be a greater reluctance to write to the Lords than to the Commons, but there are further efforts to encourage writing.
- **SPUC TV:** Suggestion that materials from SPUC TV could be used during the next series of Confirmation classes.

#### **d. SVP**

- **St David's Pilgrimage:** Occurred in August and went well, with a desire to make the pilgrimage a regular event. The vicar of St Cadoc's is diocesan pilgrimage organiser for the Church in Wales who has indicated interest in collaborating on future events. Thanks given to Aidan Reynolds, and David & Barbara Powell.
- **June Collection:** £750 in the retiring collection – thanks given to those who donated
- **SVP National Raffle:** Sold £225 of raffle tickets
- **OLSM Support:** Arranged overnight accommodation and transport for a beneficiary who turned up at OLSM without adequate funds. Continue to give lifts to beneficiaries to church and to hospital etc.

- **Additional support:** Ebbw Vale food pantry; visiting in care homes; help out at pantry; bought a Countertop Freezer for a beneficiary; continuing to provide support for asylum seekers and refugees in areas where little other help available
- **Vinnie Camp:** Donated to the Vinnie Camp for South Wales where 16 children from across the archdiocese attended (all Catholic schools were invited to nominate children who they felt would benefit from the break).
- **Geographic Outreach:** Some parishioners have queried lack of support within Abergavenny. Few requests have been made locally, but SVP work closely with other Abergavenny-based charities and Community Interest Companies, e.g. The Foodbank, Abergavenny Town of Sanctuary, Cwtch Angels.
- **Foodbank:** Transport the Food Bank Items to Abergavenny Foodbank and collect parcels for beneficiaries who are unable to collect themselves.
- **Fundraising:** MC will walk 100km of the Camino to raise funds for SVP in April 2026, with the aim of at least £1500 sponsorship.
- **Cash for Coins Collection:** During October and November, accepting both UK and foreign obsolete currency.

#### e. Choir / Michael's Mates

- **Michael's Mates:** Numbers have fluctuated somewhat between get-togethers. JD will be away for most of October, so Michael's Mates will restart in February Half Term
- **Carol Service:** Choir working on this – more information in the Headteacher's Report
- **Folk mass:** Looking to return in the New Year

#### 7. Finance issues (FM reporting)

- **Church repairs:** Repairs yet to be completed around the church.
- **Servicing:** Conducted for heating systems, intruder alarm, fire alarm and emergency lighting.
- **Car Park:** Car permit scheme for school parents been emphasised again this school year.
- **Contactless Card Machine:** Working better since inputting a new charging cable
- **Car:** Potential need for a new car for FM as advice from car garage is that any future substantial repairs are not worth doing
- **Calvary Works:** Application has been submitted and tender for the works will take place on receiving permission.
- **Sunday refreshments:** Two donations of £500 made to CAFOD.

#### 8. Safeguarding/Health and Safety

- Toolbox system is running well, with James Harris as rep.

#### 9. Headteacher's Report

- Foundation governors are sought – parishioners may register their interest via FM or the Chair of Governors.
- Father attends school regularly, with other parish connections
- Class Masses arranged
- Family Harvest Mass today
- Christmas Concert 8<sup>th</sup> December- all junior classes involved. VE to contact SL (Head of St Albans) to arrange a rehearsal. VE and SE to liaise re school members of choir. Car Parking- potential to liaise with Melville and Community Centre to use.
- Children to sing at Christmas Luncheon if choir can be established
- 10 SVP vouchers for vulnerable families
- MonLife used our school for Food and Playscheme during summer holidays
- Afternoons in the car park need to be monitored. VE is liaising with FM to sort
- Lots of work with the Archdiocese – training with HT and AHT- keeping strong links
- Potential RE inspection coming up in school
- School successful in applying for grant for a community kitchen in our school
- Links with St Albans strong- most children ever from Year 6 left us to go there in July

#### **10. St Michael's Centre Update**

- **Repairs:** now underway, expected to finish by month-end.
- **Kitchen:** back at full capacity
- **Diary:** filling up with more groups
- **Parish lunch:** Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> December. £18pp. Abbot Brendan has been invited.

#### **11. Any Other Business (AOB)**

- **TV monitor:** A rota for volunteers to assist Father with the sides on the during 10am Mass will be arranged.
- **SPUC TV:** Suggestion from ME to use SPUC TV as part of the Confirmation sessions with the new intake. FM to speak to AE and Rachael O'Connell.
- **Parishioner enquiry about the change in votive candles:** these have been changed to 2-hour votives due to health and safety reasons. Our Altar servers also now use LED candles.
- **Eucharistic Ministers:** JM and SE commissioned. Rota needed.
- **Possibility of retreat type day for parish altar servers:** FM to consider.

#### **12. Date of Next Meeting**

To be held at 11.30am on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2025

#### **Closing Prayer**

The meeting concluded with a prayer led by FM.