**Minutes of PAC Annual General Meeting Held on Tuesday 31st January 2017**

**Present:** Fr. J Barnes, P.Dance, (Chairman) D. Richardson, (Treasurer) T. Whitley, T. Doran, D. Birchall, J. Birchall, A. Ashby, F. Badcock, E. Utting, K. Pinto, B. Pinto, T. Brazier, K. Waring, S. McCallum, B. Lamberton, A. Lamberton, M. Bucknall, M. Ashley, Sr. M. Langmead, C. Richardson, P. McIntee, H. Dossor, A. Dance, M. Sargeant, J. Hills, P. Hills, Sr. J Hunter, Sr. M Hunter

**Opening Prayer and Welcome**

Phil welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending. Fr. John opened the meeting with a prayer.

**General Update**

**Confirmation of Chairman and Secretary** Phil has agreed to continue as Chairperson and Teresa as secretary for one more year.

**Minutes of the 2016 Annual General Meeting** Minutes were approved. Approval proposed by Alan Lamberton and seconded by Mike Bucknall

**Matters arising from the minutes** The Memorial plaque from St Cecilia's has been retrieved and is now safely in St Felix. Thanks to Wilf Ablard and Daniel Mayes the website is now up and running, up to date and appears on the first page of Google. Proclaim meetings now occur in the Parish once a month to discuss how we can make St Felix better and spread evangelisation. Safeguarding materials have been obtained from the diocese, leaflets are now available at the back of the Church. Catherine Richardson has set up a Helping Hands group in the Parish to help out anyone in need. The Parish had a pilgrimage to Walsingham to mark the Pope's Year of Mercy.

**Treasurer's Report** David Richardson handed out budget figures for 2017 and outlined the actual figures for 2016. At present the trend is a 20% underfund each year. The Finance Committee is constantly looking at ways of balancing the books. They have made pleas for more gift Aid donations without much success and the parish has an unusually low level of donations by direct debit. The offertory income continues a noticeably downward trend. Hall rental income is down as is candle receipts and the cost of candles has risen steeply. Fund raising income has remained steady entirely due to the hard work of Jenny and Team Felix. Many expenditure items are in line with expectations but the cost of utilities has dropped by £2000 helped by the works carried out on the hall ceiling. Levies which are calculated on offertory giving are slightly down,. The Presbytery boiler needed replacing this year. The parish received an unexpected legacy.

Works in the sanctuary are now complete, funded in part from our current account and to be reimbursed from the Diocesan Alive In Faith scheme. The ambo was constructed at no cost to the parish as it was funded by a private anonymous donation from two parishioners. Our Lady's Chapel was cleaned and redecorated, all the work being completely funded by Fr. John.

The final analysis shows that the general cost of running the parish is more than what we receive and continual dipping into our funds is not good housekeeping. In the months ahead we will need to try and reduce costs. Haley Dossor asked if we were receiving the best interest rate on our accounts. Alan answered that we are. Haley said that we need to constantly remind parishioners of the costs and deficits that the parish has. Phil rounded up by saying that we spend 30% more than we take in and that we should aim to cut our costs by 10% and increase our income by 20%. For detailed information on the parish figures please speak to David.

**Parish Priest's Review of the Year**

Fr. John started by saying 2016 had been a very full year with lots happening and that we are very much an active parish not a dead parish. Fr. started with the buildings and the completed works of the Sanctuary which was blessed by the Bishop just before Christmas. The Lady Chapel is looking good again and there have been minor improvements to the Confessional which now has a proper seat, grille and light outside. There have been small improvements to the porch with new book racks and rearrangement. The Memorial Garden will be finally completed this week when the stone slab recording Peter Smith blessing the garden in 1970 will be placed on the wall.

Most of 2016 fell within the year of Mercy. As a parish we set out to achieve 4 things, all of which we did. 1) Groups set up to study the Pope's document. 2) Pilgrimage to Walsingham and the passing through the Holy Door. 3) Helping Hands Group set up by Catherine Richardson with 20 volunteers. 4) Improvements to the Confessional.

Events within the year included the Teddy Bear's Picnic, Parish BBQ, 1st Holy Communion, Mass for the Sick, Christingle Service, Christmas concert hosted at St Felix by outside music group and the traditional Christmas lunch for 70+ senior parishioners. Fr. spoke about the groups that meet on a more regular basis, the monthly lunch club hosted by Team Felix, the CWL and groups that meet at the Convent. The young Father's Group which meets every other month, the Proclaim group which meets monthly to discuss evangelising and drawing people in. He thanked all those involved in the Church, the cleaners, flower arrangers, Doug and all involved in music, John Yelverton for all his work in the Sacristy, Team Felix for all they do throughout the year, lay ministers and those who minister to the sick, readers, those involved with Saturday Catechism classes and Sunday Children's liturgy, the newly formed children's choir, welcomers, repository, those who help with coffee, Church counters and finance committee , those who help with the website and special thanks to the Sisters at the Convent for the prayer that goes on day by day and for making their premises available.

Looking to this year Fr. said that we will be having First Holy Communion and Confirmation and an all night vigil before Corpus Christi. Hopefully another teddy bear's picnic and bbq.

**Developing a Programme for 2017**

Phil spoke about the small changes that have been made in the parish to make it better such as the children's choir, the website and the church entrance. Last year we focussed on the Year of Mercy and this year we will be focussing on families. Phil split the attendees into 4 groups and they had 20 minutes to discuss how we could focus on families in the year ahead. The four groups reported back as follows: Group 1: With two new parishioners in the group they had not been able to find a welcome pack, so we need to make our current welcome pack visible. We should look to see if there is a local refuge centre and investigate how we can help them. Group 2: CWL Ipswich support the refuge centre in Ipswich and our CWL will contact them to find out more. House groups should not be called study groups because can be off putting. A parish Family day was suggested to bring together all ages. With numbers dropping at Saturday catechism classes to look at perhaps changing the format, perhaps being more family inclusive. Group 3: we have many confirmation candidates but we don't seem to hold on to them and so we should try and involve them in parish activities. Parish group contacts could get together with the confirmation candidates to talk to them about the various groups and activities that take place in the parish and hopefully interest them to get involved. Group 4: the need to attract youngsters back to the church and how we need to understand the reasons why they don't attend. Suggestion was that we build bridges with St Albans school and find out via the school why children don't go to church as well as making contact with other youngsters to find their reasoning.

**Any Other Business**

**Organising for Resilience** Phil said this was all about having back up if something goes wrong and recommended that each person responsible for something in the parish finds someone to stand in for them. Kate Pinto has agreed to be Phil's backup so if he can't make a meeting Kate will stand in as Chairperson.

A Parish Diary was spoken about. Fr. John will be the co-ordinator of the diary so people should contact him with proposed events and dates. The diary could be made available on the website and maybe on the notice board in the porch.

**Meeting Summary**

Attendees liked the format of this AGM, Fr. John's summary and the small group discussions. Phil thanked everyone for coming along.

**Date of Next Meeting**

Tuesday 18th April at 7.30 pm

Fr. John ended the meeting with a prayer.

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Reports provided by paper copy at the meeting:

**Association of Family of Jesus and Mary Felixstowe**

Our meetings have been the usual mix of spiritual and social events. In February, we celebrated the feast of St Claudine by arranging a lunch at the White Horse and we had a well attended Easter party in April. Fr. Liam Hayes came to give us a thought provoking Day of Recollection in March based on the Pope's encyclical Laudato Si' and reflecting his own work for CAFOD. In November, once again Sr. Bridget led us in preparing for Advent. We held our Marian devotion in May and a group visited Walsingham in June. We had a visit from Sr. Monica Joseph in June who outlined her vision for the Association and in October from Sr. Annie, working in Syria. We also had talks on Coffee Break, an organisation which helps women for whom English is a second language and on India. We took part again in the Christmas Tree Festival at the Salvation Army. Our two fundraising events, the Strawberry Tea and the Christmas Coffee Morning were very successful and at both we had very welcome help from the parish. The money raised has been sent to support the Sisters' missions in East Timor, Syria and Pakistan.

**Convent of Jesus & Mary**

All the activities mentioned in last year's report have continued. The ballet classes on a Thursday from 4.00pm which started last year have continued. The Orwell Connection choir continues to practise on a Tuesday evening. Sheila Gosney runs a very successful Art group on a Monday afternoon. St. Joseph's has opened as a Retreat House. Days of Reflection on Art and Prayer have taken place on a Saturday. There have been 2 residential retreats. During the week for Christian Unity, both in 2016 and 2017 we have had a special Vespers at 4.30 pm followed by tea. This has been well attended by members of the Christian Churches in Felixstowe.