

St. Francis de Sales Parish Council News.

At our meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> February, we were joined by a 'special guest' - Frank Stanley - and also by Gary Foley who has kindly agreed to take over Frank's role of supporting our use of technology. Frank and Gary discussed their handover and some of the new developments coming our way. In particular, they took us through the programme for the website upgrade which was launched on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021. You may have noticed a marked improvement in the livestreaming of our Masses last weekend – this is due to the hard work of Mike Gaydon who – after spending a lot of time figuring out the problem – now has our broadband working properly and has adjusted the data feeds to our cameras to eliminate the buffering.

We are now in Lent – you will hopefully have noticed that the Stations of The Cross services are being streamed at 7pm on Fridays in Lent – please do view the livestream- and if you'd like to help to lead one evening then get in touch with Phil Kerton at [cpkerton@yahoo.com](mailto:cpkerton@yahoo.com)

The health and safety of Mass attendees was reviewed – we have revised social distancing and ventilation policies in place – there was some discussion of a recent study from Imperial College London which identified younger children as an increasing source of transmission – we appreciate that's it's difficult for parents of young children – and that we have no authority to require it – but we would be grateful if there could be some consideration to having all children (not babies!) wearing masks during Mass. One particular reason for this is that they tend to be more 'mobile' during services – and this could put others at risk.

Another risk is safeguarding – Vicky Foley took us through the DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks in place. Vicky has been working closely with the diocesan Safeguarding Office and is guiding us through the many procedures and processes in place to make sure that we are protecting the vulnerable in our parish.

We had a long debate about how we can improve the state of our parish finances. Mike Moran (Chair of Finance) is working hard to ensure that we remain solvent for the whole of the year – but to do so we need to raise more money – our Fundraising Committee (Anna Coffey, Phil Kerton and George Jackson) put forward a number of ideas on how we can do this – both during Covid restrictions – and once they have been eased. We are looking in particular at running a diocesan developed Planned Giving Programme to increase our income. You may hear more about this in the coming weeks. In the meantime – if you do not already do so – please consider setting up a standing order for your weekly donation – particularly if you are benefiting from our streaming – this is costing us an additional £1200 a year to run – details of how to donate are in this newsletter and on the parish website.

It has been brought to our attention that the Car Park and the Area surrounding the Church needs care and attention. Please Note: This issue is currently being dealt with and we will be looking to arrange a group of volunteers in the future to periodically work on the Car Park and around the Church.

Our next meeting is on the 18<sup>th</sup> March – if there is anything you would like us to consider please contact us via [hartley@rcaos.org](mailto:hartley@rcaos.org) – many thanks – Chris Pieroni