

Report of Meeting of Brothers Provincials and Vocation Directors

Monday 5th February 2007.

Present: Brothers Benedict Foy fsc,
James Hayes FIC, John O'Neill OH,
Sean Sellors fsc

Apologies: Brothers George Gordon CCB,
John Martin OH; Michael Newman OH

We began with a time of prayer.

A Report of Recent and Planned Activities

1. Meeting with Fr Paul Embury, Director of National Office of Vocations. A good meeting, looking to collaboration. Some problems of contact via CoR with impact on statistics and appropriate contact for enquirers. Happy to link websites of Brothers with NoV. Discussion on Website. Would be useful to have a central Brothers site, professionally done but it is better value for money than adverts or "amateur productions" (see Secular Institutes website: Religious Vocations DVD), common search tag on-line "about becoming a priest, brother etc.". He was supportive of our idea of Brothers speaking on vocations on Vocations Sunday – important witness. He encouraged us to bring ourselves and our associates to the National Vocations Pilgrimage to Walsingham – Michael Newman will be leading the Holy Hour. He is looking for information about Catholic gap year opportunities – could people please contact him – for inclusion of service opportunities on NoV website. Advanced information about National Vocations Forum – probably at Oscott 21st June topic "New Movements and Vocations".

2. Vocations Sunday. Discussion about Brothers inviting themselves to preach in parishes 3rd Sunday of Easter 22nd April. The meeting agreed to print at least 10,000 double sided printed credit card size cards for distribution on that Sunday (cost minimal which was felt that congregations would be happy to contribute to) and to provide a guide for Brothers for speaking about Vocation on that day. Please indicate to Bro Benedict It was suggested that Brothers might contact their own local radio stations to publicise what they are undertaking. It was agreed to contact the National Catholic press on the same topic and it was suggested that Brothers contact their own diocesan newspapers with a news item about this happening.

3. National Vocations Pilgrimage to Walsingham – we encourage Brothers and their associates to attend (12.00 till 4.30 approx) – no need to book but we would appreciate some indication to Bro Benedict (contact details at the end of this report.)

4. Study Session London Colney May 29th to 31st 2007. "The Church in 2027 and its implications for religious life" at the moment there has not been many Brothers who have signed up for this session. We hope that Brothers will quickly sign up for this interesting look towards the future of Religious Life as time moves more quickly than we expect. If flyers and further info are required please contact Bro Benedict (Details at end.) This flyer is also being circulated by CoR.

5. Retreat for Religious Brothers at Worth 4th to 11th August 2007, "The Prophetic Role of Religious Today and Tomorrow." Bro Philip Pinto, Superior General of the Christian Brothers has confirmed his leadership of this retreat with Sr Raimunda Jordan OP also being involved and with Abbot Christopher Jamison of Worth agreeing to act as chaplain. To date only 7 Brothers have signed up for this Retreat – in reality we are looking for at least 30 brothers to be involved. This retreat is going to be circulated this month amongst CoR male members, CORI, ARBI and CRS so Brothers from GB, who are the intended primary beneficiaries, need to book soon.

6. Brothers are reminded of the Fraternal gatherings planned for 27th–28th Oct at London Colney and November 3rd–4th at Hinsley Hall Leeds. A few Brothers have already indicated their willingness to be involved in these.

B Planning for the Future

1. A Brothers Communities UK Website. We looked at a number of examples of Website for Vocations (NoV; Compass; Tyburn; Parkminster; Secular Institutes, etc). In the light of the discussions with Fr Paul Embury reported above, it was agreed that the steering group should draw up a short list of possible creators of a common Brothers' website, with costings, design suggestions, guidelines, etc. It was suggested that we contact Ronnie McEwan FMS, as a Brother, to advise on this project. It was agreed that the steering group should make a proposal to Provincials when this preliminary work is achieved.

2. Meetings between Brothers Communities. It was felt that this is an exercise which would be encouraging for the Brothers – that Brothers in a local area meet together to discuss their joint appreciation of their vocation, vocations promotions within a prayerful and social gathering. Brothers are asked to take the initiative and invite themselves to each others' communities. Our own experience is that these are very positive and encouraging events. It was suggested that a good starting point for a first meeting might be to meet and discuss arrangements for Vocations Sunday.
3. Bro James shared that he has been asked to speak at and be involved in one of the Compass programme sessions at Worth Abbey about Brotherhood. This is a programme run by Worth for young men and women who are seriously considering Priesthood and the Religious Life. He is happy to share the perspectives of any Brothers if you wish to contact him on bro_james@blueyonder.co.uk.
4. It was agreed that the next meeting of the Provincials and Vocations Directors should evaluate the programme which has been planned.