



Missio: National Council Meeting

Tuesday 8th June 2021, 10.30 a.m. – 12 noon, Online via Zoom

MINUTES

Trustees

Rt Rev Paul Swarbrick (Chair of Trustees)
Rev Gary Brassington (also DD - CLF)
Mr Andrew Clark
Rev Greg Price (also DD - HEX)
Mrs Mary Reynolds
Mr Neil Twist

Mill Hill Missionaries / Appealers

Rev Michael Corcoran MHM (General Superior)
Rev John Hemer MHM
Rev Kevin Hughes MHM
Rev Jan Klaver MHM
Rev Emmanuel Mbeh MHM
Rev Vincent Oates MHM
Rev Bernard Phelan MHM
Mr Michael Scarlett

Staff

Rev Anthony Chantry MHM (Missio, National Director)
Mr Cedric Burke (Finance Director)
Dr Theresa Codd (Regional Community Fundraiser 'North')
Ms Claire Colleran (Education Outreach Manager)
Mr Stephen Davies (Red Box Director)
Ms Nicky Pisa (Fundraising & Communications Director)
Ms Michelle Slater (Communications Manager)
Mr Dave Wheat (Regional Community Fundraiser 'South')

Apologies

Deacon Duncan Brown (ARU), Rev Dermot Byrne MHM, Mr Eamonn Doran (Trustee), Rev Frank Downs MHM, Rev Paul Haines (BIR), Rev Gerry Hastie MHM, Rev Brian Oswald MHM, Mr David Quinn (NOT, MT), Br Eddie Slawinski MHM, Mr Mugeni Sumba (Appealer), Mrs Caroline Mayhew (Trustee).

Diocesan Directors

Rev Philip Baptiste (WES, MT)
Rev Deacon John Bell (HAL)
Rev Deacon Ronald Burke (LIV, MT)
Rev Deacon Anthony Callaghan (LIV, APF SPA)
Rev Wayne Coughlin (NOR)
Rev Patrick Daly (BRE)
Mrs Mary Dearden (SHR, MT)
Rev Anthony Grace (SHR, APF SPA)
Rev Jonathan Hart (LEE)
Rev Deacon Tom Kavanagh CBE (SOU)
Rev Canon Michael Loughlin (MID)
Rev Innaiah Maddineni (POR)
Rev Clement Orango (NOT)
Rev Carlos Quito (WES, APF SPA)
Rev Canon Paul Watson (MEN)

Welcome and Opening Prayer

- Opening Prayer - Prayer for the Year of St. Joseph.
- Fr Tony Chantry welcomed everyone for the National Council meeting. He explained that the National Council comprises the Missio National Director with all the Diocesan Directors. For this annual meeting, representatives of the Mill Hill Missionaries and Appealers are also usually invited but, due to the meeting taking place online, even more people were able to be invited this year.

Fr Tony gave a special welcome to Bishop Paul, Missio's Chair of Trustees and link with the Bishop's Conference, and Fr Michael Corcoran, the MHM Superior General.

- Break-out groups
There was an opportunity to briefly meet others in small break-out rooms.
- Programme for the meeting
Broadly under the headings of Prayer, Mission Formation, Charity.
- Overview of finances from General Assembly in Rome

Fr Tony explained that, in the previous week, there had been a meeting for all the National Directors held over Zoom. Usually this General Assembly is held in Rome over five days - two pastoral days; two days of business (approving projects); a day's outing and meeting with the Holy Father. This year, that programme was reduced down to three two-hour meetings, mainly to approve projects. Cardinal Tagle, the Prefect of *Propaganda Fide*, gave the opening address reminding us that our work is three-fold: prayer (brings us close to God and our brothers and sisters), mission animation/formation (helps the local Church understand what mission is and is a call to missionary activity), charity (fundraising to support missionaries in the field). Fr Tony thanked everyone for doing all of these three things.

Each Society at the General Assembly gave a report of the finances. Graphs were presented showing US dollars raised by the various geographical regions from 2016 – 2020. Unsurprisingly, given the Covid-19 pandemic, income in 2020 for the Universal Solidarity Fund (APF) was down for most regions, particularly USA/Canada. Global total down about 35%. Not unexpected, but serious for those who would have been receiving subsidies, on which they would rely. Many Bishops gave up their ordinary subsidy in order that others would receive more. All dioceses received less. Fifty percent of the extraordinary subsidies, i.e. the projects dioceses present to the Pontifical Missionary Societies (PMS), have been delayed because there isn't the money available.

Funds for the Society of St. Peter the Apostle (SPA - training priests and religious) also down by a similar amount, around 35%. Nevertheless, SPA supported 225 major seminaries and 1,200 novitiates (male and female).

Mission Together - many projects supported but funds down by 10-20%.

Fr Tony is hopeful that things will improve but mindful of the need to do things differently as we emerge from the pandemic.

Part 1 – Beatification in 2022 of Pauline Jaricot, one of the founders of Missio (founder of the APF)

- 2022 – year of anniversaries

In 2022 there are four important anniversaries for Missio:

400 years since the foundation of Propaganda Fide (Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples);

200 years of the Association for the Propagation of the Faith (APF);

100 years since the APF, SPA and Holy Childhood were made Pontifical;

150 years since the birth of Fr Paolo Manna, the priest who founded the Pontifical Missionary Union (PMU). The PMU is the non-fundraising Society of the four Pontifical societies, which promotes mission and the sending of missionaries.

- Pauline Marie Jaricot Video

The 200th anniversary of the founding of the APF will coincide with the beatification of Pauline Marie Jaricot (PMJ). A video about PMJ, produced by French Missio, was shown. The video is available on a website about PMJ: <http://paulinejaricot.opm-france.org/?lang=en>

Fr Kevin Hughes asked if there was a fixed date for the beatification. Fr Chantry replied that there was no date yet but the General Assembly meet in Lyon in May 2022 so the Holy Father may attend and do the beatification then.

- Facilitated Break-out groups

Groups were asked to consider the question: *What are you going to do about this in your area/diocese?*

- Feedback from Groups (based on Facilitators' notes)

Feedback from South West group

- It is a challenge to prepare anything without a date to aim for.
- We should focus on raising awareness and gaining momentum, especially with Local Secretaries in their formation and preparation.
- We can use Mission Animations and Masses around the diocese to celebrate the anniversary and beatification.
- A programme of thanksgiving Masses across England & Wales, using Cathedrals.
- The scripture around Ascension and Pentecost fit very well and could be used in celebrations & Holy Hours in parishes.
- There's an opportunity to connect Pauline Jaricot strongly to Missio.
- We have an opportunity for the recapturing of Mission in our dioceses, especially in our schools and occasions to gather in our parishes.
- The beatification presents a great opportunity for Missio to deliver a very clear and strong message about who we are and what we do.

Feedback from the North East Group

- Good to raise awareness of the fact PMJ was a lay person, and the focus on the lay apostolate and deepening our understanding of this.
- Could this tie in with the recent document from Pope Francis and the ministry of the catechist?
- Need to raise awareness of who PMJ is/was, which can start now:
 - Articles in diocesan press/social media

- Articles in national Catholic press
- Inclusion in the monthly eNews – could it be a developing story covered each month (e.g. a timeline of her life a bit at a time?)
- Two booklets already available (one cartoon-like). **ACTION:** send electronic versions to all DDs/Appealers etc. so that we all know that they exist in case they are useful.
 - https://issuu.com/catholicmission/docs/paolinajaricot_dig
 - Smaller version with cartoon images to be sent to DDs.
- Gathering together: diocesan? In a geographical area? Although we probably need to raise awareness of PMJ first so as to create interest in the event (Mass?)
- Rosary resources as a way in to particular groups in the Church.

Feedback from North West group

- Raise awareness on a deanery level e.g. through newsletters/magazines.
- Nicky shared the French website on PMJ as a resource (translated into different languages): <http://paulinejaricot.opm-france.org/?lang=en>
- Contact diocesan communications and have information on diocesan websites and in their newsletters.
- A date of the beatification would be helpful to act as a focus.
- If/when Appeals start again, include information on PMJ's beatification.
- Newsletters to Local Secretaries.
- Living rosary – might be able to do something around the groups of 15 reciting one decade of the rosary each. Virtually maybe?
- Linking the Mission Together Day of Many Colours (29th June) with PMJ. **ACTION:** Mary Dearden had some ideas on how this might work and will follow-up with Claire Colleran.

Feedback from South East group

- Need to promote the video that was shown particularly on the website. John Hemer thought it was excellent.
- It would be very useful to have a date so that a mass could be celebrated. There was a discussion about whether the mass should be held centrally or not and to couple it with a major event.
- The anniversary would be a good lead into schools and parishes and that they need to be made aware of it.
- Request for the production of materials for schools explaining Missio and the celebration so that it could be used as part of confirmation preparation.
- Suggested that a short and punchy message should be included in the Ad Clerum.
- Request for the production of leaflets to be made available so that it can be distributed to parishioners.
- Suggestion that contact with the Redemptorists might be useful in spreading the message.
- Appealers, who are currently providing supply cover at parishes, could take the opportunity to promote the beatification.
- Fr Clement thought that this was also an opportunity to promote vocations in his diocese.
- A great opportunity to relaunch Missio and mission with schools and parishes.

Fr Tony thanked everyone for their ideas and asked if there were any further comments.

Fr Kevin said that in October we start the Synodal process and there will be questionnaires coming out from Rome for parishes to discuss. As there is bound to be something on Mission, Fr Kevin wondered how we can dovetail with that.

Fr Gary said that, since we will be invited to make diocesan responses, the Diocesan Directors can ensure there is mention of Missio. Hopefully Missio England and Wales will also be involved in the process.

Fr Tony said we need to take every opportunity to promote the work of Missio and the Mill Hill Missionaries.

Bishop Paul said that he could flag up with the Bishops' Conference the need for clear priorities for what is included in the approach to the Synod.

Fr Tony is due to address the Bishops in November, so this will be another opportunity to raise this issue.

Part 2 – World Mission Sunday – a key moment in the Church's year.

- World Mission Sunday (WMS) should be a global, key moment in the Church's year when we dedicate our prayers, thought, and charity towards mission. The theme this year is from Acts 4:20: *We cannot but speak about what we have seen and heard.*

To quote from Pope Francis' letter on WMS: *"The theme for this year's World Mission Sunday is a summons to each of us to own, and to bring to others, what we bear in our hearts. Mission has always been the hallmark of the Church for, to quote St. Paul VI, she exists to evangelise."*

Fr Tony threw the question out to the group: *How can we improve the celebration of WMS this year?*

Fr Jan – every year a pack is sent to parish priests with information on WMS including homily notes, prayers of the faithful etc. Has anyone ever tried to find out how much this is used by the parishes?

Nicky responded that two pieces of research have been conducted on the pack. Varied feedback – some don't use at all, some use all elements, some just a few. The 'Thank You' poster is well used. Since we don't know who uses the pack we can't target those people that do. Also, it is a prompt to parishes and we know that if such things are sent digitally the response decreases. Missio has reduced the pack, the information is now all included in a magazine. Any feedback on how to improve this resource would be welcomed.

Fr Patrick – when someone other than the parish priest speaks it is generally well received. Can we move Local Secretaries on and support/resource them to make the appeal.

Canon Paul – some clergy are confused by Home Mission Sunday taking place in September and don't know how it is different to WMS.

Fr Patrick – clarify by a clear simple message in Ad Clerum.

Fr Jonathan – two points:

1. As regards the confusion around Home Mission Sunday and WMS, perhaps the clarity should be around Home Mission Sunday. Explain how the money collected for this is used.
2. People do need prompts. Agrees with the comment that resources should be targeted at Local Secretaries more than parish priests and try to get lay people, who may have experience of living abroad, to bring their perspective to WMS.

Fr John – we need to be clear and focused about what we are talking about when we speak of Mission. The point is to bring people to Christ as members of the Catholic Church. The WMS is an occasion to talk about this and maybe make a few bob too.

Fr Clement – need a specific focus of a country/person that parishioners are aware of a few months in advance.

Fr Bernard – agrees with Fr John that we must make use of the idea that mission is about evangelisation. The money side is important but not the real centre.

Canon Michael – has always enjoyed the material and found it useful.

Fr Emmanuel – 2 years ago the WMS materials arrived late.

Nicky replied that this problem occurred in 2019, for the Extraordinary Month of Mission, when there was a much bigger print run than normal: there was a glitch with the delivery company which the mailing house used. In 2020 the WMS mailing went fine and this year hoping that the WMS edition of *Mission Today* will go out the end of August and the materials for parishes/parish priests around mid-September. Can't send the materials too early or it gets filed and forgotten.

Fr Kevin – the Synod kicks off the week before WMS.

Part 3 – Red Box Renewal

- Mill Hill Update (Fr Michael Corcoran MHM)

Of course, 2020 and 2021 marked by the Covid-19 pandemic. Missio England & Wales held a special Covid-19 appeal and the MHM General Council received money from the appeal that was sent directly to people on the ground with the least red tape possible. Missions supported were in Kenya, Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo, Philippines, India, Pakistan, South Africa and South Sudan. The Mill Hillers on the ground are well placed to distribute the assistance to those in greatest need. May be considered a drop in the ocean but Fr Corcoran assured us that it goes a long way.

Normally, Fr Corcoran would be visiting missions around the world but, for the last 15 months, he has been nowhere except on a screen. Nevertheless, he is in contact with the missionaries and knows that they are faced with significant spiritual and pastoral challenges: they are not immune to the difficulties, pain and hardships of this time. Fr Corcoran, in communications with the missionaries, has ensured that he has expressed his thanks to them, and the gratitude of the MHM Society and Missio, because they have been on the frontline and living under many restrictions imposed by the various governments around the world. Powerful to see how many MHMs have engaged with online platforms such as Zoom.

Three areas of work over the last 15 months highlighted:

Cambodia – totally new to Mill Hill. The Church was almost purged, and almost wiped out, by Pol Pot. Received an invitation from one of the three Prefects in Cambodia and now have 2 MHMs in one Prefecture and 2 MHMs due to go to another Prefecture.

Home Front (Mission in the West) – *England & Wales* - Have taken up a Mission in Hexham & Newcastle Diocese, in Sunderland. Fr Chris Hancock and Fr Emmanuel already

there and another MHM due to arrive. Invitations from 2 other dioceses and dialogue about setting up MHM missions ongoing. *New York* – Archdiocese of New York has invited the MHMs to take up a second missionary parish in the Archdiocese, so seriously considering.

Africa – have a very young team working in Kinshasa. Had a set-back when one of the priests, in his 50s, died during the course of the last two months, but the work continues.

Appeals: continuing restrictions so not possible to make formal appeals yet. Hopefully appeals will start again next year and Missio will manage this process. However, MHMs are offering to supply for parish priests and, when they do this, they will thank parishioners and keep the flame of mission alive.

Finally, Fr Corcoran offered thanks to everyone especially Eccleston Square staff, Fr Tony, Stephen Davies, Appealers, Promoters, Secretaries and Trustees. Whatever you do it helps to make a difference in people's lives.

- Brief financial up-date for Missio

Cedric provided an overview of how the pandemic had impacted Missio's finances in 2020. At the beginning of the lockdown there was a lot of uncertainty and it was forecast that there could be a 40%-60% decrease in income.

Our largest income stream is donations and there was a decrease of 22% in 2020 compared with 2019. Legacies decreased 13%. Gift Aid improved by 29%, largely due to a greater capture of Gift Aid declarations and this income stream also benefited from the emergency appeal. Overall costs were reduced by 3%: expenditure was minimized where possible with furloughing of staff, opportunities to reduce costs taken, more effective engagement/communication with supporters, review of staff resourcing, which sadly meant that some staff were made redundant.

Impact on funds available to Rome was that they fell from £3.1 million to £1.8 million, a fall of over 40%.

Cedric then gave an update on how we stand financially for the current year. Net funds (income minus expenses) up to April 2021 exceeded the same period in 2019 due to benefitting from the refocused *Mission Today* magazine which is also accompanied by a letter and donation form to individuals, legacies now starting to come through, money banked in diocesan bank accounts showing early signs of recovery (possibly reflecting easing in restrictions), also received a substantial contribution toward Mass stipends.

Fr Tony said no time to take questions now but that if anyone had any questions or comments then they should contact Cedric direct.

- Results of the recent consultation with Local Secretaries and plans for the future (Theresa and Dave)

Fr Tony introduced Dave and Theresa, who started working for Missio as Regional Community Fundraisers in 2020, just as the pandemic broke. They were due to be out and about meeting Local Secretaries, parish priests and supporters but couldn't do that because of the pandemic. However, they have contacted people by Zoom, telephone, e-mail. They conducted a consultation about the

role of Local Secretaries and presented a PowerPoint presentation to report their findings.
Powerpoint slides available.

Summary of points made in the presentation:

- Over 150 people consulted: Local Secretaries (LSs), Diocesan Directors, Mill Hill Appealers, Appeal Coordinators, parish priests, Missio staff.
- Positive messages from the consultation: LSs keen to be involved in change and wish to be re-ignited in this ministry; move to more digital means of communication in the pandemic paves the way for the future.
- Negative messages from the consultation: many feel burdened and anxious for the future; unsure how we will engage the younger generation; financial support for the spread of the Faith not seen as a priority.
- Areas to develop: promotional materials; training & formation; processes (internal & external); communication; structure e.g. parish clusters; community.
- Follow-up with working groups to look at particular areas: cashless giving; the role of the Local Secretary; training & formation; resources.

Notices, Approval of the Minutes, changes in personnel, dates for the diary

- **Approval of the Minutes**

Voted on and unanimously approved.

- **Changes in personnel**

Starters: *Dave Wheat* (March 2020) and *Theresa Codd* (May 2020) in the roles of Regional Community Fundraisers .

Leavers:

In November 2019 *Catherine Scott* left Missio for a job with the World Community for Christian Meditation.

Since the end of March this year, *Gerald Ani*, *Monica Caro*, *Monique Cohen* and *Laura Leathem* no longer work for Missio.

At the end of April *Sheila Isaac* left Missio for a mission job in adult formation with the Franciscan Sisters of the Divine Motherhood. She will be replaced once schools are up and running again.

At the end of December 2020, *Mary Rafat* retired from Missio after many years of dedicated service. Mary was the National Director's PA and then legacy administrator, and subsequently made a sterling job of organising our archives in preparation for their transfer to Durham University.

Deaths: *Deacon John Carter* DD for Wrexham (4 October 2019)

Canon Brendan MacCarthy (DD Arundel and Brighton and Chair of Trustees for many years) – died at the start of 2020.

Fr Owen Grant MHM who was on the Red Box circuit.

Diocesan Directors

Leavers:

Fr Philip Knights, Westminster APF (end of 2020)

Fr Christopher Hancock MHM, Cardiff (end of 2020)

Deacon Bill Ball, Liverpool APF (end of 2020). Deacon Bill is not well so prayers were requested.

Starters:

Deacon John Bell, Hallam (mid-2019)

Fr Mathew Jacob, Lancaster (mid-2019)

Fr Carlos Quito, Westminster APF (start of 2021)

Deacon Anthony Callaghan, Liverpool (start of 2021)

Appealers: *Monica Biscoe*, *Eileen Tompkins* and *Geoff York* have stepped down since the last National Council. *Bernard Phelan* has recently done so. Fr Bernard was present at the meeting and Fr Tony offered thanks to him and wished him well in his retirement.

- **Dates for the diary**

National Council 2022: Beginning of June (possibly at The Hayes, Derbyshire or High Leigh, Hertfordshire).

Closing Prayer and Blessing

- Fr Tony thanked everyone for attending and for all they do.
- Bishop Paul thanked all who are active in Missio. Thanked the Trustees for their work, particularly during this past year when difficult decisions have had to be taken: they have sensitively and conscientiously done their duty. Thanked those working behind the scenes, the Mill Hill Missionaries, Fr Corcoran, and Fr Tony for his attractive and thorough style of leadership. Fr Michael's comment about the drop in the ocean reminded Bishop Paul of a Tonga proverb, from his time in Zambia: *the river is full of little drops of water*. Our relationships are one of the most important things about Missio, not just what we do for the young churches but what they do for us: it is not one-way traffic. Their prayer, example and often their joyfulness and knowledge that God is with them in the midst of horrendously difficult situations, is truly inspirational.
- Closing Prayer – Pauline Marie Jaricot prayer.