

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE JOINT PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL (JPPC)

Held at Our Lady Help of Christians, Rickmansworth
8th July 2024 @ 7.30pm

| In Attendance: | Apologies: |
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| Father Andrew Gallagher | Beatrix Li |
| Richard Booth | Jane Irwin |
| David Kendrick | Father Matteo Di Giuseppe |
| Dee Vanstone | |
| Eddie O'Sullivan | |
| Elaine Price | |
| Lizzie Quinn | |
| Sue Noble | |
| Belinda Calen (Youth Group representative) | |

1. Welcome and Prayer

Richard welcomed everyone to the 29th JPPC meeting. Father Andrew opened with a time of prayer.

2. Opening items

Father Andrew confirmed that Father Matteo (who is on holidays) will be leaving our parishes at the start of September to be the Assistant Priest of the parishes of St Mary Magdalen, Willesden Green and the Church of the Transfiguration, Kensal Rise.

Fr Domagoj Matokovic (Fr Dom), who was ordained to the priesthood on Saturday 29th June, will be joining our parishes as the new Assistant Priest, and will arrive on 1st September.

Father Andrew also confirmed that Paul Forrest is moving to Manchester this week after 18 years in the parish. The JPPC reflected with thanks on Paul's active role within the parish communities in many areas, including his leadership role as part of the SLT for the past 5 years since its inauguration.

3. Matters Arising from Previous Meeting – 13th May 2024

Correction: Sue Noble was present at the May JPPC meeting (the meeting minutes incorrectly advised that she provided her apologies).

First Holy Communion - We have now added a "please pray for" notice in the parish newsletter for children as they receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion for the first time so that other members of the parish are aware and can pray for them and their families.

Livestream messaging – Father Matteo suggested extending the livestream messaging on the parish website to let people know they can request a priest to visit for the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Action (Father Andrew): Explore modifying livestream messaging.

Visits to the sick and housebound – Claire Pride has agreed to develop a flyer for use by parishioners visiting family and friends to raise awareness of how the housebound can receive visits and the sacraments.

Action (Jane Irwin) – share an update on flyer development.

4. Discipleship

Alpha - Richard confirmed that Alpha will run 16th September – 2nd December. Alpha will run on Monday evenings. There will be one session on a Saturday (exact date TBC). There was a lot of interest at the Alpha stand that was provided at Brass on the Grass on 7th July. The group reflected on a previous action to leverage the Alpha signage at the front of Our Lady's to raise awareness, and also to signpost the Alpha course on social media.

Action (Richard Booth) – share an update on banner placement.

Action (Jane Irwin) – share an update on social media awareness.

GIFT - 55-60 families are now signed up to GIFT and ~35 families are participating regularly.

Father Andrew shared that ~30 people joined the pilgrimage to Westminster Cathedral, which included a picnic, cathedral tour and Mass in the crypt. The most recent parents' session had 3 participants but this was partly due to the usual reminder email not being sent due to staff being on annual leave.

8 children will be receiving the Sacrament of First Holy Communion throughout the month of July. GIFT will be on break for the summer holidays; Father Andrew will share autumn dates in the coming weeks.

Action (Father Andrew): Share GIFT dates once confirmed.

Faith and Friendship group - David shared the group continues to meet each fortnight (on Wednesday afternoon at Our Lady's), and is going from strength to strength, with lively and interesting discussions.

Kairos - this group meet virtually on the last Tuesday every month, with involvement extending beyond our parishes. Paul Forrest will continue to run Kairos with Anne Lorrimer-Roberts even after he moves away from the parish.

Prayer & Life workshops - a second series will commence in September, with a taster session taking place on Tuesday 16th July. Leaflets ran out at Brass on the Grass. There is now also a youth connection (see Youth Group).

Action (Prayer & Life Catechists): Share Prayer & Life dates.

RCIA – Father Andrew advised there are two possible RCIA candidates so far; he has already met with one and is recommending Alpha as an initial experience, and is meeting the other later this week. The usual RCIA meeting day (Wednesday evenings) may be modified to suit the new candidates; further updates to follow.

Action (Father Andrew): Advise RCIA meeting day once confirmed.

Baptisms - no updates on baptisms based on apologies from both Father Matteo and Jane.

Confirmation - with the departure of Father Matteo, Father Dom will be taking over Confirmation in the autumn.

Warm Spaces / Community Lunch – the Community Lunch is now in its second month and is well-attended. The tea & coffee provided by Celia before lunch begins is being very well-received, particularly for those who join directly after Mass.

Note: There will be no community lunch in August.

Parish Cell Groups - no updates based on apologies from Beatrix.

Action (Beatrix Li): share an update at the next JPPC meeting on parish cell groups.

Understanding the Mass - the series continues; a dedicated page has been created on the parish website for these and will be shared in parish newsletters to raise awareness.

Young Adults Group - the first Young Adults Social took place on Sunday 9th June. While initial attendance was low, it was a very lively discussion. Ben and Sabrina are exploring different ways to increase participation in future sessions. Lizzie mentioned she had recommended exploring the Catholic Worker (Rickmansworth) and Pints of View (Sarratt) as possible sources of young adults. Father Andrew will share the new group at an upcoming Deanery meeting so that other parishes can encourage participation.

Action (Father Andrew): Share Young Adults group at upcoming Deanery meeting.

5. Youth ministry

Belinda provided an update on the Youth Group, which is now up to 8 young (still all girls).

The Youth Group will break for the summer holidays and will recommence in September.

The group itself is likely to change, with an increasing age gap between the older and younger youth.

Games, meals and quizzes (including on faith) are the best-received activities.

The new volunteer will not be able to commit until 2025 as she is planning to join Alpha.

The Youth Mass held at St John the Evangelist (Mill End) on 18 May as a Thanksgiving Mass was a great success.

The Youth Group focus at Brass on the Grass worked well, including the separation between older and younger children.

The sponsored walk did not take place on 2nd July due to pending information regarding sponsorship options. The new plan is to start preparation in September for a walk that will take place in April.

A drive at all three parishes to raise awareness on Fair Trade Fortnight (22nd September) is still being planned.

Action (Margaret Simon): Share Fair Trade fortnight details with Jane Irwin so that messaging can be shared across parish social media accounts.

The team are also currently exploring a Prayer & Life workshop specifically for young people, which will take place in autumn. This will be a good “next step” for all those who have recently received the sacrament of Confirmation. Father Andrew believes this could be incredibly powerful to support young people understanding their identity as a Christian.

Additional volunteers would be very welcome, as they are much needed!

6. Communications - Social media strategy / Parishes website

Lizzie shared a brief update on social media in Jane’s absence.

Work continues on increasing the profile of the three parishes across broader social media. Support from parishioners to identify popular local groups (particularly on Facebook and Instagram) is still needed.

Action (Father Andrew): Raise at next SLT meeting to see if there are any suggestions.

Parish events including the Corpus Christi procession, Marian procession, GIFT pilgrimage to Westminster Cathedral and Brass on the Grass have all been showcased.

There has also been the first showcase of one of the faith groups, with Kairos being featured on Facebook in June.

7. Parish Development Plan – EVANGELISATION

Father Andrew opened with a recap of the Divine Renovation definition of Evangelisation (found on page 269) – “the proclamation of the Good News of God’s love revealed in Jesus, and the salvation offered through His cross and resurrection [...] Evangelisation is directed to those outside of the Church, but may be also be aimed at those within the Church who know about Jesus but do not know Him personally.”

The plans outlined at the September 2023 meeting were:

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| 6 months | <p>Diocesan support – Father Andrew shared that the Agency for Evangelisation wrote in June to offer catechists who could share teachings on evangelisation; he has written requesting support and is currently waiting on a response. <i>WIP</i></p> <p>Alpha – discussion about re-using the banner to increase awareness beyond the parish, and potentially posting on community Facebook groups. <i>WIP</i></p> <p>Wider sharing of parish events on social media. <i>Ongoing</i></p> <p>Christmas – showcasing the Christmas carols evening on 10 December. <i>Complete</i></p> <p>Create a Christmas playlist to be shared on social media. <i>Complete</i></p> |
| 12 months | <p>Hold a Lenten retreat. <i>Complete</i></p> <p>Organise another social event in summer 2024. <i>Complete</i></p> <p>Hold talks to explore specific topics relating to the Catholic faith. <i>WIP</i></p> |

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| 5 years | <p>Consider how we can inspire the ~350 people within the parish to spread our message with others, and how we can use sacramental moments as opportunities for evangelisation.</p> <p>Consider how to engage with people visiting Our Lady's as part of the Chess Valley Walk.</p> <p>Create different pamphlets explaining aspects of the Catholic faith, that could be made available in the church foyers.</p> <p>Make more of the garden crucifix at Our Lady's, including the possibility of having a Nativity play held there long-term.</p> |
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During the July 2024 meeting, the team discussed a range of topics, and made updates to the plan as follows:

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| 6 months | Hold talks to explore specific topics relating to the Catholic faith* |
| 12 months | <p>Unifying as the Christian churches in the local area**</p> <p>Join other church events (Christmas, summer holidays etc.) to understand what is being offered.</p> |
| 5 years | Hold an ecumenical Christmas carols service |

** Hold talks to explore specific topics relating to the Catholic faith*

Holding talks in the month of October is still being planned. Father Andrew shared the concept of holding a Marian novena – 9 evenings of prayer in a row. The intention would be to invite a different guest preacher for each evening to discuss different aspects of Mary. Belinda liked the idea of different perspectives from different preachers. This could also be a good opportunity for people to see other priests. Eddie suggested inviting former parish priests, which was well-received by all.

Eddie expressed some concern about commitment of 9 days in a row. This was balanced by others pointing out it could offer multiple opportunities for people to join, without creating a sense of obligation that all 9 days were required. Richard emphasised the importance of offering something for people to follow at home.

**Unifying as the Christian churches in the local area*

Reverend Simon from St Peter's Church, Mill End was leading these efforts but is moving on and it will be ~12 months before a new vicar is appointed.

Elaine has tried making contact with the other churches in Chorleywood via email, but no response as yet. Richard is going to connect with James Roberts (contact at Clement Danes) to see if that can help garner a response.

Action (Richard Booth): [Connect with James Roberts and share update.](#)

St. Andrew's definitely organise things around Christmas; Lizzie suggested we join their events this year and use that to make connections / build a relationship to be used next year.

Sue mentioned the Connect church does a nativity story within the St. Clement Danes school and encourage their parishioners to invite people.

David mentioned Christ Church has done a mail drop in the past few weeks with an outline of what activities are taking place over the summer. Several others (Sue, Elaine, Dee) all confirmed they have had family participate in these events over the years, and Father Andrew added several parishioners provide support to the summer Detonate event for young people.

Dee mentioned Christ Church invite all the Chorleywood primary schools to St. Andrew's and provide an introduction to secondary school from a Christian perspective. Elaine added they send children who are on the mailing list things in the post (bookmark with a prayer, something motivational).

8. Any other business

Increasing awareness of volunteering / ministry – the possibility of obtaining insight into the number of volunteering hours, planned giving etc. was discussed at the March meeting, aiming to leverage annual reports produced to share with the Diocese. This action is to carry forward to a future JPPC meeting.

Action (Father Andrew): Source volunteering details from Kerry to share at next JPPC meeting.

Holy Year – Westminster Diocese is organising various activities for the Holy Year in 2025, including creating walking pilgrimages in London (e.g. Westminster Cathedral to Tower of London) and there will also be one in Hertfordshire. There is also discussion regarding holy doors being set up in some churches. Further information to follow.

Lectionaries change at Advent – 4 new volumes are required for each parish. Most have already been sponsored. The intention behind the new translation is to be closer to the original Greek. Some kind of formation on the new changes will be provided, with details to be confirmed. Eddie asked about the Mass sheets. Fr Andrew confirmed these will remain the same.

Upcoming parish events – outlined as follows:

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|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| TBC (October) | Marian novena |
| 21 st September | Deanery pilgrimage to Walsingham |
| September (date TBC) | Father Matteo's farewell |
| 2 nd November | Deceased Parishioners' Mass |

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 9th September 2024 @ 7.30pm Venue: St John the Evangelist, Mill End