

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

Held at Saint John Fisher, Chorleywood

13th May 2024 @ 7.30pm

In Attendance:	Apologies:
Father Andrew Gallagher	Beatrix Li
Father Matteo Di Giuseppe	David Kendrick
Richard Booth	John Donohoe
Eddie O'Sullivan	Sue Noble
Elaine Price	
Jane Irwin	
Lizzie Quinn	
Toni D'Urso (Youth Group representative)	

1. Welcome and Prayer

Richard welcomed everyone to the 28th JPPC meeting. Father Andrew opened with a time of prayer.

2. Matters Arising from Previous Meeting – 11th March 2024

Follow-up work on the planned giving campaign (completed in March) continues for all parishes.

Father Andrew has updated the messaging on the livestream to raise awareness that those unable to attend Mass can request Holy Communion to be brought to them. There has been no contact yet following this update. Father Matteo suggested extending the messaging to also let people know they can request a priest to visit for the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

There had been a suggestion to create a flyer for use by parishioners visiting family and friends to raise awareness of how the housebound can receive visits and the sacraments. Jane offered to ask Claire (part of the social media team) if she would be willing to support creating the flyer.

MINISTRY - outreach opportunities

Regarding the possibility of having an interfaith stall at the monthly Rickmansworth markets, Jane has contacted Andrea Fraser (Council Chair of Batchworth Community Council) to suggest an option for a stall that could be used by any of the faith groups in the community.

Andrea thanked Jane for the suggestion and committed to put it to the councillors at the next meeting (due to take place on 15 May).

Father Andrew will mention this discussion at an upcoming meeting of the other church leaders at Churches Together and encourage the other leaders to reinforce the request.

There was a suggestion about inviting the other faith leaders to Brass on the Grass as a starting point for wider discussions. Father Andrew will do this through Churches Together for Rickmansworth.

Elaine has offered to support engaging the wider Chorleywood community; Father Andrew will confirm best starting contact with her.

3. Discipleship

Alpha

The Alpha team have recently met to confirm the next series, which will take place in September, and will run for a total of 12 weeks. Days are under discussion (Monday or Tuesday evening, or Sunday afternoon). Toni asked for third Tuesdays of the month to be avoided, if possible, as the Youth Group takes place on that evening.

GIFT

57 families are now signed up to GIFT and ~35 families are participating regularly. The most recent parents' session had ~10 participants.

15 children are preparing for First Holy Communion, and 9 children are preparing for First Reconciliation as part of this journey.

Faith and Friendship group

~20 people continue to meet per fortnight, and sessions continue to be both valuable and impactful.

Kairos

The group meet on the last Tuesday every month, with involvement extending beyond our parishes.

Prayer & Life workshops

A second series is being discussed for the autumn; further updates to follow.

RCIA

No new RCIA candidates identified at this time.

Baptisms

Jane and Father Matteo shared there were 3 families who joined the most recent session, with impactful discussions, including raising awareness about different aspects of faith and discussions on possible deeper involvement in the parishes. Additional sessions are being held in May and July.

Confirmation

The Sacrament of Confirmation was given to 17 young people on 11 May, preceded the week before by a retreat facilitated by Iona and Zuzanna from the Westminster Diocese Youth Ministry Team. The candidates will celebrate this as part of the Youth Mass on Saturday 18 May.

Warm Spaces / Community Lunch

Warm Spaces has concluded for the season and will re-commence in the winter.

The first Community Lunch (which replaces Warm Spaces for the summer months) was well-attended. These will take place on the third Sunday of each month in the church hall at St John the

Evangelist (complemented by the Baptist church in Mill End, which holds a similar lunch on the first Sunday of each month). Celia also joined to make tea & coffee for people before lunch began.

Week of Guided Prayer

The week of guided prayer took place 21-26 April, with ~18 people participating with individual guides (in-person and online) and in-person talks with 15-25 people at each of these. Great feedback was received, particularly about Vron (the facilitator). Jane advised that Claire from the social media team is going to engage with some of the people who participated to develop testimonials for sharing on social media.

There was discussion about how often the parishes should run these, though there is a cost incurred (£1,000) which will affect how regularly the parishes can offer this experience.

Parish Cell Groups

Beatrix will share an update at the next JPPC meeting in July.

Understanding the Mass

Great feedback has been received on the “Understanding the Mass” handouts so far. Eddie asked if these were going to be added as newsletter inserts. Father Andrew explained the cost to do this is prohibitive, though he is working with the website developer to understand how the handouts can be added as a dedicated section on the parishes website.

Young Adults Group

There are two people (Ben and Sabrina) who have recently joined the parishes. Both have previously run the Catholic Society while at university, and have offered to set up a Young Adults Group. They are inviting young people at all the Masses over the coming weeks, and the first Young Adults Social will be taking place on Sunday 9th June.

4. Youth ministry

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

A new volunteer (Patsy) will join at the next Youth Group meeting.

The Youth Ministry team would like to increase the structure of the topics that they cover; since the Caritas team have still not released their content, Margaret has been exploring Impact, and Father Andrew confirmed this was a good alternative.

A Youth Mass will be held at St John the Evangelist (Mill End) on 18 May as part of a Thanksgiving Mass following Confirmation, which takes places the week before.

A sponsored walk will take place on 2nd July to support fundraising for wheelchairs for the Lourdes Pilgrimage team. Margaret has engaged with team, but has not yet had a response – Father Andrew will see if he can support follow-up on this. Elaine suggested setting up a Just Giving page to support donations, which the wider team thought was a great suggestion.

For Brass on the Grass (on 7 July), the Youth Group have asked to focus on 11-14 year olds. Margaret has also suggested allocated times for age groups, and the whole team has asked if there can be a joint discussion with everyone involved in organising children’s activities. Father Andrew confirmed

that Lizzie will be helping co-ordinate Brass on the Grass this year, and Lizzie agreed to organise a discussion to firm up details of the different activities to take place.

There will also be a drive at all three parishes to raise awareness on Fair Trade Fortnight (22nd September).

6. Communications - Social media strategy / Parishes website

Social media - the team (Jane Irwin, Claire Pride and Lizzie Quinn) held a meeting in March to review activities for the past year and develop a plan and strategy for the next 12 months.

One topic was how to increase the profile of the three parishes across broader social media. Since the Rickmansworth Town Centre Facebook group and Rickmansworth Parents Facebook page both accept groups as members, the Chess Valley parishes account has now joined both groups.

Father Andrew asked if there were similar groups in Chorleywood or Mill End. Lizzie and Jane both confirmed they'd looked into this, but have not found anything yet. The best way to find out would be if parishioners from both these parishes who are active on social media could share suggestions.

The weekly "What's On" summary continues on both Facebook and Instagram, and is now also on X.

Additional "parishioner profiles" (Richard, Cormac, Barbara and Margaret) have been shared on Facebook (through the private group only), and continue to be very popular.

Given the increased content, Eddie asked if it was a good time to push the platforms in the parish newsletter again. Father Andrew agreed this could be a good idea, as it has now been several months since the parishes social media presence has been highlighted.

Father Andrew has also shared the latest National Safeguarding Guide from CSAS with the social media team, which has a dedicated section on social media.

Parishes website

Richard asked who the appropriate contact person is for updating content on the parishes website; Father Andrew confirmed Kerry should be the first point of contact.

7. Parish Development Plan – WORSHIP

Father Andrew opened with a recap of the Divine Renovation definition of Ministry (found on page 269) – "Our primary act of worship is the celebration of the Eucharist. Worship can include prayer meetings and times of praise experienced in small groups".

The plans outlined at the July 2023 meeting were:

6 months	Hold a Youth Mass for the feast of Christ the King (completed) Build up the Folk Group at the 6pm Mass (<i>a work in progress</i>) Introduce the use of incense at the 11am Mass (introduced, but dependant on altar servers, so happens more regularly at 6pm Mass) Increase group of servers (good progress with now ~20 across all three parishes)
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12 months	Increase youth readers (only a couple in Mill End only so far) Increase musicians and welcomers (WIP)
5 years	Develop the Youth Choir (developing) Develop Youth Music Group for Teenagers (Jaison has agreed to support this)

During the May meeting, the team discussed a range of topics, and made updates to the plan as follows:

6 months	Consider how the parish cell groups can contribute to “times of praise” (to be discussed with Beatrix, who is organising these). Use the month of October to develop something more intentional around praying the Rosary (this also builds on previous JPPC discussions on holding a talk about Mary during October). Add a “please pray for” notice in the parish newsletter for children as they receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion for the first time.
12 months	Continue to increase youth readers Continue to increase musicians and welcomers Introduce Youth Music Group for Teenagers Increase Stations of the Cross options in Lent 2025 (not just Friday evenings*) Consider ways to showcase the faith-based activity groups more widely** Organise a joint parishes Carols service at Christmas (as was done in 2023) Invite the Joan of Arc choir to sing at Mass (weekday or weekend TBC)
5 years	Continue to develop the Youth Choir Hold a second Week of Guided Prayer Host an evening of spiritual music (organ recital or similar) Introduce a cantor Hold a joint pilgrimage or walk across the parishes***

**Stations of the Cross*

This was initially discussed based on a suggestion from Jane about whether Stations of the Cross could be organised more regularly beyond Lent. Eddie advised that this used to be a very regular occurrence in Chorleywood, but has dropped off in more recent years. His suggestion was to focus

on increasing participation during Lent, rather than adding additional sessions. Father Andrew suggested increasing the options and offering on an alternative day of the week to start with.

***Showcasing faith-based groups more widely*

Richard suggested having testimonials from the different groups to raise awareness beyond the information that is available on the parish website. Lizzie suggested use a QR code once a month in the parish newsletter to direct people to relevant section of the parish website. Alternatively, we could have a “What is the” as a new section in the parish newsletter. Father Andrew will discuss the options with Kerry and update the team at the next meeting.

****Joint pilgrimage / Walk*

There was discussion about the possibility of a joint pilgrimage or walk across the three parishes, possibly also involving some of the other churches in the local area. Lizzie mentioned that there had been a Deanery walk at her former parish in North London, and committed to obtaining more information on how this had been organised for the next JPPC meeting.

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.

Upcoming parish events – outlined as follows:

18 May	Youth Mass (St John the Evangelist)
2 June	Corpus Christi procession & parish party (St John the Evangelist)
9 June	Young Adults Social
23 June	English Martyrs procession & parish party (St John Fisher)
7 July	Summer joint parishes event
TBC (October)	Marian novena

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 8th July 2024 @ 7.30pm. Venue: Our Lady Help of Christians, Rickmansworth