

## SACRED HEART PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETING

Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2024 in the Parish Lounge

### MINUTES

<p><b>1. Welcome, opening prayer and apologies</b></p> <p>Rachel Purvis opened the meeting in prayer at 8.05pm.</p> <p>Present were: Ruth Naylor (Chair), Rachel Purvis, Jude Mariadoss, Siobhan Heffron, Christopher Woodward (for the Finance Committee), Sr Dorothy Perrott, Maria Christopher, Annette Campbell-Black, Teresa Engley, Deacon Julian Burling, David Hurst, Primavera Moretti (taking minutes), Fr Matthew Donnelly, Giovanni Peruzzo, Max Toone and Fr David Gibbons. Apologies were received from Fr Jackson Sebastian and Rob Hitchcock (Faith Minister)</p> <p>With some amendments from Sr Dorothy and Siobhan Heffron, the minutes of the last meeting were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chair. They will be uploaded to the website shortly.</p>	<p><b>Ruth</b></p>
<p><b>2. Minutes of last meeting</b></p> <p>Status on actions which were not picked up in agenda items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Ruth's flyer: there is now a poster on the noticeboard and the flyers have all been taken. <b>Action Ruth to print more.</b></li><li>● Notice boards are now up to date.</li><li>● Come Home for Christmas. No updates but David will make sure the delivery area is clearly defined next year.</li><li>● Edgeways subscriptions/print copies – David has a budget to print 100 copies. The challenge will be to get them into the hands of the right people. There should be a notice to ask people not to take them if they can get the online version. Primi commented that the white on blue is hard to read. David said the font is also too small when printed so it will have a white background and larger font next month. <b>Action: David</b></li><li>● Cafe after family mass will happen when Angela is not doing breakfast. David reported that there were 50 guests last time (the first communion classes have started).</li><li>● Sr Dorothy has not started asking families to take up the offertory but will do so shortly.</li><li>● Bob Rathbone (Music Director) and Wendy Tansey (Edge Hill Players) will join us for the March meeting.</li><li>● Everyone to contribute to comments on Fundraising/messaging Audit (link circulated with agenda) send any comments directly to Ruth. <b>Action: ALL</b></li><li>● Primi has written an article for the February edition of Edgeways about generosity.</li><li>● The Christmas lunch was in the January edition.</li></ul>	<p><b>Ruth</b></p> <p><b>David</b></p> <p><b>ALL</b></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Primi and Ruth are having an ongoing conversation about DofE / volunteering. David has links with Care for Calais so people who want to volunteer can speak to him, and he can connect them. Similarly, the Friendship Group approached Wimbledon College and the Ursuline High School looking for volunteers and they have replied with enthusiasm.</li> <li>● Unity Service on 21<sup>st</sup> Jan had very good attendance. There was a good atmosphere in the church and in the lounge afterwards. Father David's homily was excellent.</li> <li>● Chris and Max have made contact with the company that assists in letting church halls but have not yet met up with them.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>3. Parish Groups</b></p> <p>Grace O'Neill, new project manager of Faith in Action's drop-in service came to speak to us. It's not specifically a parish group but Grace is a parishioner who took on the role of centre coordinator in Dec 2023. The service aims to help excluded members of society, furthering their cases for support and helping them out of their situations of despair. It is Merton's local homeless charity and needs volunteers, financial support and prayers. They run a drop-in service for 50-60 people on Wednesdays and Fridays from 10-2.30pm at the Salvation Army Hall on Kingston Road. They have 50-odd volunteers. Guests are given breakfast, an opportunity to get laundry done, have a shower and get a haircut. Lunch is served at 12.30 using food donated from AFC Dons and regular donors who give fresh veg etc. Meat and vegetarian options are available. They also give the guests clothing such as hats, gloves, scarfs as well as sleeping bags etc. The group caters for everyone. They also help vulnerably housed people to get grants etc.</p> <p>It's not tied to a borough, which really helps homeless people who are often transient as it's not safe to stay in the same place. People can be full of shame when they lose their homes and choose to remain hidden. Some have had a bad experience of perceived injustice and may have a distrust of authority-type institutions. So, it's not always easy to persuade people to come in. A council has to house people when temperatures fall to a certain level, but the person has to have been seen in that Borough for a certain amount of time before that Borough is obliged to help.</p> <p>Chris pointed out there used to be a page on the website advertising services that can be accessed by people in need of help. Fr David agreed that the parish could organise a collection of clothes and bedding.</p> <p><b>Action: Grace to let us know what she needs.</b> Otherwise, people can take donations to the Salvation Army Hall on a Wednesday or Friday morning. The Faith groups involved in the Merton Night Shelter are also involved in this.</p> <p><b>Action: Sr Dorothy to add in prayers for the homeless to the bidding prayers.</b></p>	<p><b>Grace</b></p> <p><b>Sr Dorothy</b></p>

#### 4. Synod follow-up and Some Definite Service

**Discussion: How might the People of God be formed together to enable everyone to answer the call to conversion and live out their baptismal vocation fully?**

We first talked about what's happening in the parish now. The First Holy Communion catechism classes are starting again. Giovanni commented that in his diocese in Italy they're doing parental catechesis in parallel. Fr David agreed that family catechesis is becoming a more common way of doing it; Eleanor was doing it this way last year, but this year it was not possible due to Rob only just having arrived. Lots of parents find it really hard to talk to their children about faith at first, but when they get into it, it becomes easier and very valuable for both parents and children. The Wednesdays Word is helpful for this.

Adult Faith Formation is more challenging: you can only say so much in a homily.

Edgeways has restarted and provides an opportunity for gentle catechetical messages.

As previously discussed, Fr David would like to see us set up some house groups. The Sevenoaks coordinator will come and talk to us after Easter. This year we have some Lent talks happening.

When you survey people about what they want, it seems adult faith formation is near the top but when you put things on, people don't turn up.

Primi asked whether we could look at forming small groups demographically / by life stage, so people are more likely to stick with their group, feeling they have more in common with the other members and it speaks more to where they are.

"Faith at the School Gate" was run by a group of Sacred Heart Primary parents who used to go to Krispy Kreme after drop-off to talk about the faith.

Max said people come to groups for the social element, especially food and the house retreats in the adult house often revolve around food. He recalled a saying: "Belong, believe and behave". "Belong" comes first – people will come if they receive a personal invitation and it is through being part of a community that they grow in faith.

Fr David said that at Sevenoaks there was a small team who would speak at mass, talk to people and give them leaflets.

Grace said that a friend of hers who was a single mother used to go to church after school. As a single mum she felt excluded from the normal services, but this arrangement made it easier for her.

We need to provide a range of opportunities.

The nice thing about small groups is getting to know people well. People will notice if someone doesn't turn up. This helps to build community.

Fr Matthew said that some follow-up for the RCIA is essential, so the newly received are not left alone and are accompanied in the initial years of their faith journey. Fr David said that one group in Sevenoaks focusses

on pre- and post-RCIA. Sr Dorothy says the RCIA group last year organised themselves to do this as they've already formed a friendship. David H will interview one RCIA candidate in Edgeways.

Rachel is part of a house group which grew out of the Synodal discussions and meets once a month in Motspur Park. It's essential to have smaller groupings in such a huge parish, otherwise it's hard for people to get to know each other. David H will do articles on the various Prayer Groups in Edgeways. For example, there's a virtual Saturday morning one called Prayerfully. It runs for about an hour and is based around the Sunday Gospel. Members can drop in. The group have got to know each other over the last three years so aren't actively looking for new members. You don't want to exclude people but there's a confidentiality that only grows with getting to know people over a couple of years. Groups like this could seem cliquy to anyone new. But the group could put out seeds to start a new group along the same lines. Leadership can be an issue. Primi commented that there had been a notice in the Parish Newsletter asking for volunteers to run a Bible Study group. Primi wanted to join such a group but felt that setting it up from scratch and leading it was too much of a commitment for her at the moment. It's easier to find leaders from within an existing group, especially as they would be more confident about HOW To run it once they'd seen it done. We discussed whether it would be possible to provide a template for how to lead a prayer group, or a small group, to make it easier for someone to start/run one. They can meet for just 6-8 weeks, have a break and then either re-form or carry on or close and start a new one with a different topic. Formed.org / Sycamore makes this easier.

Chris asked: is CAFE (Catholic Faith Exploration) still going? Primi thought so but said it might be a bit dated [subsequent research shows it was taken over by the Catholic Bishops' Conference as part of the Catholic Evangelisation Service]. Maria reminded us that she had shared a link to 5 sessions on the Our Father from the Archdiocese of Southwark on the PPC WhatsApp group. Ruth said this is a good example of a template which anyone can take and use. We need to find the people and give them the ministry and make them all leaders.

Fr David reminded us that there are 4 lent talks scheduled. Dr Caroline Hull from ACN will do the first one (27<sup>th</sup> Feb). Fr Michael Holman from the Jesuits (5<sup>th</sup> Mar). Martin Kochanski, the creator of Universalis (12<sup>th</sup> Mar). John Colby - Caritas Southwark (19<sup>th</sup> March). It's not a series – the talks are unrelated – so anyone can come to as many or as few as they would like to.

Giovanni pointed out that there is a gap post confirmation. There used to be a Youth Group. It's hoped that Rob might be able to restart this. Fr Matthew hopes to be hosting Youth2000 with Max at the end June for a retreat primarily aimed at 18–35-year-olds. Ideally we'd have some groups under 18 but we'd need the right processes in place. This doesn't mean that people outside those age brackets can't attend. An event like

<p>this could produce a legacy in the Parish and we should get the Deanery involved. Primi pointed out that we have the feast of the Sacred Heart and lots of weddings in June which could make the timing difficult, so September is also a possibility. To be discussed in more depth.</p> <p><b>Update on Some Definite Service Parish plan</b></p> <p>Activation Day on 9<sup>th</sup> March in the Amigo Hall (next to Southwark Cathedral). There's also an Evangelisation Expo on 20th April.  <a href="https://aecsouthwark.churchsuite.com/events/0i0rxphu">https://aecsouthwark.churchsuite.com/events/0i0rxphu</a></p>	
<p><b>5. Parish Social Life</b></p> <p>Ruth did not get much response to the ad in the newsletter asking for volunteers. We're going ahead with the pancake party on Sat 10<sup>th</sup> 7.30pm onwards in the Upper Hall. It would be an informal thing after 6.30pm mass. Ruth to make the link more accessible. The hobs are not working in the Upper Hall kitchen. Fr David said these would soon be fixed, but not in time for the party. The aim is to use the event as a springboard to try to pull a bigger group together to plan the Sacred Heart Feast on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> June. Giovanni said some families had asked about doing something for the children mid-afternoon (which is why they had pulled out of helping with the pancake party). We could have a garden party with food and an entertainer, toy stall, bottle stall and an ice cream van (see notes from last meeting). It could be a bit of a fundraiser too. You need someone to ask different groups each to take a role e.g. Brownies could do a toy stall, Scouts could do some games <b>Action: Primi agreed to speak to the uniformed groups, Giovanni to speak to C&amp;L about whether they can organise the food.</b> Siobhan said the School choir could come and sing.</p> <p>We discussed the new parishioners' welcome event on Sun 17<sup>th</sup> March in the lounge at 3pm with tea and cakes. Annette is catering. Chris will send invitations to new parishioners and to parish organisations who want to recruit new people.</p>	
<p><b>6. AOB</b></p> <p>Julian as governor of Sacred Heart Primary School pointed out that they need more children. Rob is running staff prayer and starting a CAFOD group in the school.</p> <p>Fr David explained there has been trouble with unhelpful and unauthorised parking in the car park. Fr Jackson couldn't get out to a funeral and staff have been subjected to abuse. This can't continue so we must introduce parking restrictions while maintaining access to The College. There will be cameras recording vehicles entering and leaving the church car park (not The College). People coming to mass or on Parish business will be able to register their number. It will be run by a</p>	<p><b>Ruth</b></p>

<p>company called Creative Car Parking who run the car parks at Croydon and Farnborough. It will not apply on a Sunday.</p> <p>The PPC formally congratulated the Edge Hill players on their excellent production of Sleeping Beauty.</p>	
<p><b>7. Date of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at 8pm in Parish Lounge</p>	<p><b>Ruth</b></p>
<p><b>8. CLOSING PRAYER</b></p> <p>Rachel closed the meeting in prayer at 9.40pm</p>	