

SACRED HEART PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETING
Thursday 5 December 2024 in the LOUNGE
MINUTES

1. Welcome, opening prayer and apologies

Sr Dorothy opened the meeting in prayer at 8pm. Present were Ruth Naylor (Chair), Rachel Purvis, Jude Mariadoss, Christopher Woodward (for the Finance Committee), Sr Dorothy Perrott, Annette Campbell-Black, Teresa Engley, David Hurst, Primavera Moretti (taking minutes), Canon David Gibbons, Max Toone, Rob Hitchcock (Faith Minister). Apologies were received from Deacon Julian Burling, Giovanni Peruzzo, Max Toone, Fr Jackson, Fr David, Maria Christopher. Siobhan Heffron. We welcomed as observers Nina Beltran and Jose Garibaldi who are considering becoming members of the PPC, and James Bush representing Sacred Heart Primary School.

2. Minutes of last meeting

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.

Status on actions which will not be picked up in agenda items:

- Canon David said there was nothing to report as yet on Church Parades for the Uniformed groups.
 - Rob is now a deanery mentor for catechesis, so other parishes can approach Rob for support and advice on catechesis. The PPC congratulated Rob on achieving this status.
 - Rob explained that in trying to update the Parish Google Account in order to ensure our status on Google is correctly listed, he struggled with the fact that he would need a gmail address and an accessible phone number in order to set up a new one. Paul Davis says that the parish had a Google account which was something like wimparish@gmail.com. He is continuing to work on this. **Action: Rob**
- Canon David also reported that he has had trouble with the Presbytery postal address which isn't registered anywhere. The postman knows where it is, but it is an issue when you try to order things online or do official things as it doesn't appear on pull-down menus. He contacted Merton Council street naming department and they've now registered the address and the post office will also register it so this problem should now be solved.
- Chris has spoken to Jane from the Wimbledon Arts Society about the projector screen and their view is that the current screen is ideal for them. It would cost £3-4,000 to replace it. If other people want a smaller screen to use, there is one, although we're not sure it's fully functional. If it turns out it can't be used, we can order a new one as this wouldn't be that much money. A new lectern has been ordered as the old one was in a poor state of repair. The edge of the stage isn't easy to see when you're on the stage so a white line is going to be painted on it.

- Matteo has improved the font on the newsletter. Teresa took the redesigned newsletter to the elderly lady she visits who agrees it is much easier to read. Primi also agrees that the new one is clearer, having compared the two on screen.
- A Talk on scams has been arranged in the Upper Hall 2/4/25 at 7.30pm

3. Sacred Heart Primary School

We welcomed James Bush, a representative of the school. James explained that the school is due a Catholic School inspection. One of the action points from the last report was to grow connections with the parish and they have been working on this. There is now an enrichment group for each school year. They follow the 'Come and See' programme. One year group looked at 'Vocation and Service' so made a trip to the church to celebrate mass and question Canon David about why he wanted to become a priest. Year 5 came to look at 'Marriage and Commitment'. The school is also making more connections by putting information about the school in Edgeways. The School choir aim to attend the 10am Family Mass once every half term (although it wasn't able to happen this half term due to staffing issues). Children from the school also act as readers and take part in the offertory and collection.

The Catholic framework for teaching encourages teachers to promote Catholic Social Teaching (CST), so they've created mission weeks where each year group is given a mission with a particular focus. E.g. Year 4 were showing solidarity with the poor and distributive justice by bringing in food for a local food bank. The parishioners were invited to be part of this. David Hurst was invited to the Year 6 mission week MacMillan coffee morning and was amazed at the huge number and variety of cakes that he was offered.

Parishioners are also encouraged to get involved in school events such as the Carol Concert on Friday 6th at 7.30pm which has been promoted in the newsletter and the Christmas Fair on 13th December and the nativity performances. **Action: James to send dates so this can go in the newsletter.**

Chris pointed out that the SVP gets a cheque annually from the school from the Harvest festival.

53% of 300 children in the school are Catholic, which is quite low so there's a need to work to embed the Catholic ethos in the school. The teachers need to walk with the children and model being a servant of Christ. Two children were baptised recently. Rob comes in each week and promotes CST with the prayer leaders and they then go out and teach the children about CST. David H pointed out that there's a big board by the hall displaying the 8 points of CST.

The school is undersubscribed in Reception – they have two forms but only enough children for one form so the classes are very small. There are a lot of competing Catholic schools around here and we're in a birth-rate lull at the moment, compared to 15-20 years ago when there was a baby boom and lots of schools had to increase the number of forms.

When asked if the non-Catholic parents are sympathetic to the ethos, James explained that they're happy with what the school is offering. He said they want the pupils to be rounded individuals who go forth to be like Jesus. He also explained that all other faiths are celebrated and children of other faiths are encouraged celebrate the feast days of their religion, dressing in appropriate national costumes and so on.

"Learning in Love" is the school motto and "Faith Hope and Love" are the school values.

The boys tend to go on to Richard Challoner and some to Wimbledon College. Most of the girls go to Holy Cross or Ursuline.

One of the priests from Sacred Heart Parish comes to the school most weeks and parishioners join them to celebrate mass in school with the children.

James is MC at St Teresa's in Morden and he's been able to train the servers in school.

Sr Dorothy pointed out that there also needs to be a mission to Catholic children in non-Catholic schools and encouraging them to be altar servers can be a really good way of connecting with them.

Fr David reminded the PPC that the Catholic Sancta Familia Academy Trust for Catholic schools in Merton and Sutton was recently formed and all the Catholic Schools are in the process of joining this.

St Teresa's school have speakers that come in and have a coffee morning with parents as some are not sure how to teach their children about the faith. Not all the teachers are practising Catholics. Chris reminded us that there used to be a meeting for SH parents at Krispy Kreme to help parents engage more with their own faith and learn how to pass it on. There is also the Wednesday word which can be shared/discussed at home and James told us that the school had a Travelling Rosary which went round different families in October. Some parents don't know how and to pray the rosary and so wanted to know more and this gave them a good opportunity to learn.

This is the angle Rob has taken with the Holy Communion. The parents really enjoy learning about their faith. They write questions anonymously which Rob addresses. He's had some really interesting ones, such as "Where do unborn children go when they die?" and "When will we get a black pope?" They use YouCat (not the 'penny catechism'). They recently had an opportunity for the children to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the children had guidance of what they needed to do for each step. Canon David said it had really helped them not to get anxious.

Next week they're going to Wintershall. Chris suggested a parish trip to Wintershall to see the "Life of Christ" which is a whole day performance in the summer.

4. Updates from Canon David and Rob

Jenny Cairns and Nicky, who run the dementia group Memory Lane Club, now say they really need to hand it over as they won't be able to do it much longer. They haven't been able to persuade any helpers to take it over. Some people are prepared to assist whoever

runs it but can't take on the responsibility of actually running it. It would be a shame if it folded, especially as it is the only dementia group in the area and the NHS refer people to it and it's advertised in GP receptions. It takes a certain amount of organising. One suggestion was to find a paid coordinator since it's about 8 hours of work a week and they need some kind of experience of people with dementia. This would cost £4-6,000 a year. Could Faith in Action know/have someone? It doesn't have to be a parishioner or a Catholic. Primi said this amount could be fundraised. Susy Hicks, local Lib Dem councillor has mentioned that there is a Merton Fund which we could look at. There's also the AELTC Fund and Wimbledon Community Fund. It would be good to have someone professionally qualified as it's a considerable responsibility and they'd also be in a stronger position to train other people. The first step would be to make an appeal in the newsletter and from the pulpit but need to be honest about the level of responsibility. The group donates about £1,000 towards the parish for the rent of the room from the attendees' voluntary donations. **Action: Canon David to put something in the newsletter and organise for someone to speak from the pulpit.**

5. Succession planning

Ruth is standing down after two years as Chair. After Christmas the chairmanship will be rotated for a few months so people get a chance to try it out and see if they take to it. It was decided to 'send a thing round' to decide on a chair for January. **Action: Primi to send and ALL consider whether they can please come forward to chair in January**

6. PPC Mini Retreat

Saturday 15th February is now booked. We get coffee midmorning and a sandwich lunch from. Canon David will organise the retreat itself. We have the room for from 8.30am to 2pm. We will start at 9am for tea/coffee/arrivals, with the first session at 9.30am. Thelma needs to know who is going. **Action: All to reply to David Hurst. David H to inform Kairos. Canon David to pull programme together.**

7. Jubilee 2025

The Archbishop is talking about dedicating 3 churches as 'Jubilee Churches' – as yet we're not clear what this would involve. There's a poster in the porch describing the events in Rome. More news expected.

8. Parish Community initiatives

12th Nov – Rachel went to a meeting - conversations with Council Leaders: Ross Garrod (Lab) + Deputy Ellie Stringer (Lab) but didn't find it very relevant.

Graham Kennedy is working on raising awareness of parish groups.

David Hurst has registered to join the London Borough of Merton Interfaith Climate Action subgroup. A parish representative is needed.

Thu 28 Nov Graham Kennedy attended training on how to set up / revive the 'Be Well Hub'

12.00pm – 7.00pm Thu 5 Dec South London Citizens 'Day of Action' at Waterloo Station

7.00pm Tue 10 Dec ONLINE leaders' meeting – interested observers welcome

7.00pm Wed 5 Feb Scriptural Reasoning Interfaith Evening, Wimbledon Synagogue – ask David if interested

Edgeways - two year-six primary school students interviewed Canon David for the December issue. Two year 11 Ursuline High School interviewed Eion Kelly in November then Polly Harrison on Ursuline High 'Enrichment Programme' in December.

9. Parish Social Life

(a) Christmas Lunch (update)

Giovanni is organising this with Thelma. Ads for volunteers have gone out. Annette is leading the decorating team. They are doing the hall on 10am 23rd and clearing up 10am on 30th. Invites have gone out. Will get gifts for about 100. Lifts also being organised.

(b) Christmas leaflet distribution

David picked up the leaflets today – they've done 15,000 – being distributed by West London Promotions and Street PR. Canon David has asked Thelma to find out when they're delivering them so we can look out for them and check they've been delivered.

(c) New parishioners' welcome tea

9th March at 3pm. Annette can help with the catering. **Action: Annette**

(d) Thank-you party for volunteers

It was agreed it would be nice to have something. It shouldn't be a pancake party because this ends up being a lot of work cooking and tidying up but for thanking volunteers it's nice for it not to be too much work for them. A canape and drinks party in the upper hall would work best. Annette is happy to organise the catering side of things and book the hall with Thelma. It should be in Eastertide, early May avoiding Bank Holiday weekend – e.g. Saturday 10th – **Action: Annette to check with Thelma**

The Sacred Heart Feast will be on 29th June. **Action: David H add to parish diary in Edgeways.**

(e) Social committee

Primi said it would be difficult to move forward a regular full programme of events without a working group keeping an eye on it. Canon David's concern is that without such a group the PPC would spend too much time on social events. We have a few people that are interested. The issue is how to bring them together. It would be good to gather some volunteers names, invite them to a meeting and go from there. JP de Quay has a lot of experience.

8. AOB

It would be good to instate a running diary of forthcoming events in the PPC agenda so we can plan ahead re: inviting people. The last page of Edgeways is the parish diary. David puts any dates he's got in there. **Action: Primi add to Agenda Schedule**

Ruth expressed her thanks to everybody for their work this very busy year, including new parishioners teas, pancake party, Sacred Heart Parish BBQ and there has been a lot of change and we've said goodbye to Fr Matthew. The PPC offered a big thank you to Ruth who has spent two years as Chair when she had said she would do one year.

9. Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 2nd January in the Lounge.