OUR LADY OF LOURDES

HARPENDEN

MEETING OF THE PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

MONDAY 26th FEBRUARY 2024

7.30pm

UNDERCROFT

AGENDA and MINUTES

PRESENT: Canon Anthony, Eddie, Jon, Fernanda, Dominic, Dennis, Jane, Sarah, Caroline, Lucy.

APOLOGIES: Mark, Katie, Liz.

1. Opening Prayer – said by Canon.
2. Welcome & Apologies.
3. Minutes of last meeting – Accepted and signed.
4. Matters Arising – Dom, Caroline and Lucy will meet with Canon to follow up the issues from the Parish Survey. Fernanda will resend the PowerPoint related to this (DONE.)
5. SYNOD 24
   - These questions are the two from the two open meetings:
   - What are we doing in our parishes to proclaim our faith to:
     - ▹ those who have never heard of Christ – easier for them to get what they want from an Evangelical Church. No easy way round this. Lead by example – inspire people. Problem of thinking we need to know all the answers before we can approach people. The Synodal Pathway is trying to address this. How do we connect in the first place?
     - Not to be fearful or embarrassed about faith. Have faith visible at home. Live faith in gentle way. Personal experience of Christ important.
     - ▹ those who have ceased walking with Christ – Good Neighbour; private conversations. Need to exude confidence that it's better off knowing Him than not. How to make people welcome (perceptions by the wider culture can be influential)?
     - Not sure we're reaching them. Church is welcoming and does good work.
     - ▹ those with whom we worship Christ (those who go to church)? – easiest to address – everything we do is designed to assist those with whom we worship. Need to be more relaxed about proclaiming our faith. Cultural change needed. One minute talks at end of Mass about what had helped to deepen people's faith (variety of different ages)?
   - How can we do this more effectively in our parishes? – see above. Also – Exercise love. Need to overcome different cultural approaches and perceptions. Need to offer support at the right times. Training people to be Spiritual Directors. Study groups advertised through newsletter – what's it all about? Something similar for lapsed Catholics. Need to explain what goes on at Mass to people who are not Catholics (weddings, funerals etc.) People have a responsibility to exercise their faith – how do we encourage this? How do people find the time? Many people don't understand the language of the Church. Convert ourselves first! Need to be welcoming and non-judgemental.
   - What structures may need to change? How might we need to develop the way we are organised currently? – Easier to give large amounts in North America to develop parish and diocesan structures. Imperfections of Church not always being obviously addressed. There is comfort in existing structures. Concern about future (priests etc.) Need to be brave – more inclusive and cherishing. Hold onto tenets of Church. Need to pull people toward message not push them.
6. Any other business – AOB: LiveSImply: Jon said that he hoped that LiveSimply could be embedded more fully into the life of the Church so it is not seen as just another 'group' within the parish, by working more closely with the PPC. For example, it was hoped that LS Environment could set up competitions (e.g. 'Grow Your Own') aimed at young people, to tie-in with the PPC's youth focus.

Need for communication between different groups so we are aware of what is going on Parish-wide. What is done now: Screen – one-liners (brief communications), Comms Team trying to give resume of what groups do via screen / newsletter; conversations before Youth Mass. Suggestions: newsletter on Facebook; need for reconstitution of annual Parish Meeting (at same time as Christmas Bazaar); coffee after Mass; presentations at Mass.

Easter Music Reflection Friday 15th March at 7.30 – reflection and scripture.

Sunday March 17th: 10.00 – 3.00 for those 14+ Holy Spirit Day – day of reflection etc. Could Katie circulate details around the local churches?

What more could we do for elderly people? Life Ascending Group and Good Neighbours are our existing 'outreach.'

Request for collaboration from Rock Church (bring youth groups of both congregations together.)

7. Date of Next Meeting – Monday April 22nd at 7.30 p.m.