

OUR LADY OF LOURDES HARPENDEN

Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) held in the undercroft, on Monday 28th February 2022.

Present were: Canon Anthony Dwyer, Eddie Gaynor, Liz Bradley, Lucy Rochford, Fernanda Paukstys Baptista, Jon Newham, Tony Fields, Sarah Shpley, Mark Quigley.

From MDT: Dennis Cooper and Alison Fox.

The meeting opened with a prayer.

1. **Welcome, Apologies & Introductions**

Canon Anthony welcomed everyone, and thanked members for their willingness to serve on the new Parish Pastoral Council. Members then introduced themselves.

2. **Why do we need a PPC?**

A PPC provides an opportunity for PP and parishioners to work together, and listen to each other. A representative group can provide a variety of thinking and suggestions. It was also requested in the parish survey.

3. **Background Papers**

Papers were distributed, and commented on by Alison Fox, which included background on the Renewal Programme to date, Parish Goals, Organisational Structure, PPC Terms of Reference, Mission development Team (MDT), communications Team and welcoming Team.

4. **Post Pandemic Issues**

It was said that approximately 60% of parishioners had returned to regularly attending Mass. How do we get in contact with those who are 'missing'? The Cardinal's suggestion of approaching someone who hadn't returned, was thought to be a good one. It gives everyone a mission, a task.

- It was mentioned that we would shortly be looking at restarting the neighbourhood contact teams. Their role would include looking out for neighbours in the parish, and also welcoming new parishioners in the neighbourhood. We would also be looking to restart the welcome events for new parishioners.
- On encouraging people back to Mass it is acknowledged that it may be a case of encouraging people to break habits that have formed during the pandemic.
- It was suggested that encouraging more altar servers might help and that holding regular training sessions where the children have an opportunity to come together outside of their serving duties is a good way to encourage them.
- Celebrating Catholic Mass at St George's as one of their regular weekend chapel opportunities was discussed as a good way to reach that section of the community. This is something that could be discussed with the school.

5. **Family & Young People Project**

A discussion paper, prepared by the MDT, was circulated, on the possibility of a working group on Youth and Families

- It was emphasised that any ideas should be on the table – there should be no limits.
- Anyone who would like to should be able to be involved in the group.
- The document has been passed to the PPC to discuss and finalise, including deciding the timeline.
- It was suggested that perhaps it may not be necessary to wait for the full working group report before some changes could be made, and tried – we should not be afraid of trying things even if they don't work. This applies generally too, not just to this working group and it was acknowledged that would be good to see some actions coming out of the formation of the PPC fairly quickly.
- When the document has been finalised the idea is that the MDT will work with the Communications team to promote the working group, and will facilitate setting the group up.

6. Follow up to Synodal Pathway

The report, on the Synod meetings had been sent to the Diocese, and distributed to parishioners. It was recognised that some of the suggestions made at the Synod meetings, coincided with those made in the parish survey. An initial step, would be to identify the 'overlaps', and see what could be done in the short term, what would take longer, and what rested with decisions from Rome. It was recognised that it was important to keep parishioners aware of what steps had been taken.

7. Items for future meetings

There were no suggestions forthcoming.

8. Dates of future meetings

The plan is for the PPC to meet 6 times per year. There was some enthusiasm to perhaps meet more often. The official meeting frequency will remain at 6 times per year for now, to be reviewed later. However, if necessary there is no reason that additional meeting cannot take place or small groups meet separately to work on specific issues. Suggestion was made that perhaps the Terms of Reference be reworded to say "at least 6 times per year" at the next review. It was noted that part of the reasoning behind making it 6 times per year was to ensure that the commitment was not off-putting to anyone considering putting themselves forward to be a member of the PPC now or in the future.

Next PPC Meeting: 28th March 2022, 7.30pm

9. Any other Business

- The MDT are producing an Annual Report based on the presentation given at the Parish Gathering. This is in it's final stages of preparation and will be sent to be professionally printed, before being distributed to parishioners at Mass one coming weekend.
- There was a general request from groups that there should be a calendar where everyone can see what is coming up in the parish to help groups with planning. There will be a "What's On" page on the new website with the intention that all parish events will be added to it.
- It was suggested that a handrail be installed on the steps to the sanctuary. This is already being considered, but as the church is a listed building, a submission would have to be made to the Historic Churches Committee.
- A Chair of the PPC will be appointed by the Parish Priest.
- Jon Newham agreed to take on the role of Secretary.

Ways of working:

- It was agreed that email would be the preferred communication method. WhatsApp was ruled out.
- The MDT will provide an update to the PPC on work done/progress made on any tasks prior to each official PPC meeting.

The meeting Closed at 9.30pm.